IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR VETERANS CLAIMS

HEZEKIAH GREEN, JR.,	)	
Appellant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	Vet. App. No. 16-0740
	)	
ROBERT A. MCDONALD,	)	
Secretary of Veterans Affairs,	)	
Appellee.	)	

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SECRETARY'S SUPPLEMENTAL MEMORANDUM OF LAW
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I. RESPONSE

As the Court recognizes in its first question presented, sections 1.600-1.603, title 38, of the Code of Federal Regulations were promulgated in 1994, nearly 20 years prior to the creation of the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). The technological landscape that existed then is not the technological landscape that exists now. The legal landscape regarding the duty to protect private information has likewise evolved over the last two decades. While access to data and information is easier, threats to data and information have increased and, so, with those advancements come increasing complexity and risk to agencies such as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) which holds the sensitive information of millions of veterans within its internal systems. Protecting sensitive information and data is of utmost importance and this case must be viewed in light of the modern-day technological and security landscape,

not solely within the context of regulations issued decades prior to the creation of VBMS.

By their plain language, sections 1.600 through 1.603 only apply to the Benefits Delivery Network (BDN) and the specific data/information enumerated in § 1.601(c)(1). Since the promulgation of the regulations in 1994, much of the functionality of BDN has been transferred to the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal (SEP). The provisions of §§ 1.600-1.603 never provide for access to a veteran's claims file and neither BDN nor SEP include functionality to access a claimant's eFolder (claims file) and, as such, the provisions of §§ 1.600-1.603 relating to remote access are inapplicable to VBMS. Although general access to inspect or copy a claimant's record is governed by privacy laws and regulations, there is no statutory or regulatory right to *remote* access to VBMS and, since such access includes access to VA's internal system and claimants' eFolders contained therein, additional security measures are required. The means VA has developed to ensure secure access to VA's internal system and to protect the integrity of the system for representatives of claimants before the agency is through VA accreditation. Moreover, since there is no right to *remote* access to a claims file - to include the eFolder contained within VBMS - it is within VA's discretion to determine the means by which it provides *remote* access to a claims file/eFolder via VBMS and the Court does not have jurisdiction over VA's management of its own internal system. The procedure that a user be VA

accredited for *remote* VBMS access is reasonable given VA's overarching responsibility to protect veterans' privacy and security.

1. Sections 1.600-1.603 do not apply to remote access to VBMS.

Sections 1.600 through 1.603 do not apply to VBMS. These regulations were enacted prior to the creation of VBMS and, by their plain language, contemplate a very specific and limited type of remote access. There is no reference to VBMS in the regulations and, instead, the plain language of the regulations makes clear that they apply to remote access to "automated Veterans Benefits Administration [VBA] claims records" which is limited "*only* to the inquiry commands of the [BDN]" which, in turn, provides access to very specific categories of *data*. 38 C.F.R. § 1.600(a)(1), (c)(1) (emphasis added). Sections 1.600(c)(1)(i) and (ii) limit access to categories of *data and information* within BDN and were clearly designed for records systems that do not provide complete access to the claims file itself, as VBMS does. Because §§ 1.600-1.603 specifically provide for access *only* to BDN and the *data* contained therein, they cannot be reasonably read to apply to VBMS.

2. Sections 1.600-1.603 govern access to veterans' benefits data through BDN which has been superseded by SEP.

Veterans' benefits data is defined as personal and corporate data collected and used for the adjudication of claims and disbursement of benefit payments to veterans and their dependents. *See* BDN User Access Guide (November 22, 2013) (Attachment 1 at 4). BDN is a legacy application used for processing

claims for compensation, pension and fiduciary service, education, and vocational rehabilitation and employment (VR&E) and financial transactions. *Id.* BDN pulled data from various systems and allowed access to:

- The Veteran's name, social security number, gender, date of birth, and military service information
- Claims information, folder location, claim status, establishment date, processing and history
- Award data, rating data, service-connected medical conditions, income data, dependency data, payment, and deduction data
- Education information including facility, program data (except Chapter 32), program contribution and delimiting data

38 C.F.R. § 1.600(b)(4)(c)(1)(i)-(ii).

The above information was accessed through five inquiry commands within BDN. *See* 38 C.F.R. § 1.600(b)(4)(c)(2). An explanation of the inquiry commands are listed here and corresponding test screen shots are attached (Attachment 2):

- BINQ – Beneficiaries Identification and Records Location Subsection (BIRLS), shows Veteran/beneficiary's identification information. This is the default screen displayed in BDN.
- SINQ – status inquiry for the claim being processed.[1]
- PINQ – shows claim type, jurisdiction, station, folder location, the name of the VA employee assigned, and suspense date.
- MINQ – shows rating decision information.
- TINQ – payment history and data.

See also (Attachment 1 at 6-10).

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[1] Using SINQ commands results in display of one of the other inquiry screens and therefore a screenshot is not being supplied.

VA shifted to Veterans Service Network (VETSNET) in November 2000 and, beginning in 2010, SEP is now used to access the data and information listed in 38 C.F.R. § 1.600(c)(1) and (2), as outlined above. *See* VBA Letter 20-00-44 (November 17, 2000) (Attachment 3).[2]

SEP is a self-service portal designed for external stakeholders, business partners and service providers (including powers of attorney (POAs)) to access web-based systems, information and services on behalf of Veterans and VA. *See* SEP User Guide (Attachment 4 at 3). SEP currently reads and allows limited updates to the data within VBA's Corporate Database for disability compensation, pension and vocational rehabilitation and employment lines of business. Like BDN, this data is limited to information on a claimant's claim status, payment history, address, awards, and rated disabilities. In addition to the data previously available through BDN, POAs can submit claims on behalf of a Veteran and upload documents via SEP.[3] *See* Screen shot of SEP (Attachment 5).[4]

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[2] Certain claims such as spina bifida and burial claims as well as the payment aspect of education benefits are still processed through BDN but the status of such claims is also viewable via SEP.

[3] Generally speaking, BDN and SEP are primarily used by representatives before the agency and not the Court as a means for representatives and VSOs to provide information quickly to Veterans inquiring about their claims or to assist Veterans in their claims. *See* 59 Fed. Reg. 47,082, 47,083 (Sept. 14, 1994). VA carved out an expansion, or exception, to the general records access regulations by providing remote access to a limited amount of data for the purpose of providing easier and more efficient access to the claimants' records and so that VA employees could spend less time providing access to representatives who did not have their own computers in Regional Offices. *Id.* Such access is

However, BDN and SEP are fundamentally different than VBMS in both the degree and the kind of information that can be accessed. VBMS provides for access to VA's internal claims processing system and shows two different types of information that are *not* available in BDN/SEP: (1) electronic copies of correspondence from VA to the claimant/POA generated as part of the benefits process (e.g. ratings narratives); and (2) a view of the claims folder (eFolder) including all historical documents such as documents the claimant submitted to VA (e.g. applications for benefits, supporting records), documents others sent to VA on the claimant's behalf (e.g. disability benefits questionnaires), documents in the possession of VA or other federal agencies (e.g. military service treatment records) and all documents VA generated during the benefits process for its internal use.[5]

While SEP access is very similar to the type of claims status information historically available via BDN, VBMS is fundamentally different from both, in that the eFolder within VBMS stores the actual evidence used to decide claims and

especially important before the agency insofar as representatives before the agency are faced with a record that is continuously changing as new evidence is added. This is in contrast to attorneys before the Court who receive a copy of the record before the agency (RBA) at the outset of litigation – and the record before the Court is static.

[4] The information in the screen shots is test data.

[5] *See* National Deployment of Paperless Claims Processing System Underway, January 14, 2013. Available at: http://www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=2418. *See also* VA Strategic Plan to Eliminate the Compensation Claims Backlog, January 25, 2013, Appendix. (Attachment 6 at 9). Also available at: http://benefits.va.gov/transformation/docs/VA_Strategic_Plan_to_Eliminate_the_ Compensation_Claims_Backlog.pdf.

permits the user direct access to VBA's *internal* claims processing system. It is

clear then that §§ 1.600-1.603 never applied to the evidence contained in the

claims file and to the extent that Appellant's counsel seeks access to VBMS

which includes access to her client's eFolder/claims file, such access is not

governed by these regulations.

3. **There is no right to *remote* access to original VA claims files, paper or electronic. General access is governed by the Privacy Act, 38 U.S.C. §§ 5701 and 7332, and corresponding implementing regulations; allowing *remote* access to VBMS – VA's internal claims processing system – is entirely within VA's discretion, although such access is limited by certain information security requirements.**

VA may not disclose information relating to a claim without appropriate

authorization. Certain confidentiality statutes, namely, the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C.

§ 552a, and 38 U.S.C. §§ 5701 and 7332, generally govern VA's disclosure of

claimants' records, whether paper or electronic, to their representatives. These

records include federally protected private information and sensitive records

about veterans which VA has been charged with safeguarding. *See* Privacy Act,

5 U.S.C. § 552a (Privacy Act); 38 U.S.C. § 5701 ("Confidential Nature of

Claims"), § 7332 ("Confidentiality of certain medical records"); 38 C.F.R. §§

1.500-1.525 (pertaining to the release of claimants records and *inter alia* setting

out the confidential and privileged nature of such records), 38 C.F.R. §§ 1.575-

1.582 (implementing Privacy Act). The Privacy Act governs the disclosure of

information pertaining to individuals and provides that a Federal agency may not

"disclose any record which is contained in a system of records by any means of

communication to any person . . . except pursuant to a written request by, or with the prior written consent of, the individual to whom the record pertains . . ." 5 U.S.C. § 552(b); *see also* 38 C.F.R. § 1.576(b). In short, representatives may see the claims files of those individuals whom they represent if the claimant has indicated in advance in writing to VA that the named individual or organization represents them on a claim for benefits and the claimant has given prior written consent to VA's release of information to that representative. *See* 38 U.S.C. § 5701(b)(1).

However, nowhere do these laws and regulations require VA to provide *remote* access to VA claims files. This is evidenced, in particular, by 38 C.F.R. § 1.525(b)(6) which provides that, in any case involving litigation against the Government, *inspection* of a claimant's folder shall be within the discretion of the General Counsel or Regional Counsel. *See also* 38 C.F.R. § 1.511(b)(3) (*disclosure* of claimant records in response to the Federal court process will be made to those individuals designated in the process to receive such records and that *original records must remain at all times in the custody of a representative of VA*) (emphasis added). Additionally, 38 C.F.R. § 1.577(a) governs an individual's access to his or her record contained in "any system of records maintained by VA" and allows "a person of his or her choosing" to "accompany him or her, to review the record and have a copy made of all or any portion thereof in a form comprehensible to him or her."

Taken together, these regulations do not require VA to provide representatives *remote* access of any kind to claimant records outside of section 1.600 *et seq*, which, as discussed above, has never included remote access to the source inputs and output documents generated within the claims process. Instead, reference to the discretionary nature of the *inspection* of those records, disclosure only to those designated to receive records with the requirement that original records remain in the custody of VA, and the fact that a person of the individual's choosing may *accompany* him or her to *view* the original record and make copies, makes clear that VA's policy of permitting access to view records at a VA office, to include VA's Office of General Counsel (VAOGC), is longstanding and rooted in safeguarding individual privacy from the misuse of information. *See generally* 38 C.F.R. § 1.577 (Note). VA has always permitted a representative to view original VA claims files at a VA office.

Although there is no right to *remote* access to VA claims files, because the Secretary recognizes that such access inures to the benefit of veterans insofar as it eases the process of representation, the Secretary has been endeavoring to provide such access to individuals representing claimants before VA as it has shifted from paper claims files to electronic claims files. However, *remote* access to VA's internal claims processing system via VBMS is fundamentally distinct from the disclosure of claimants' records to a representative or attorney, as outlined above, because it involves access to (1) the claims file or eFolder (2) and is dependent on access to VA's claims system within its internal network

and, therefore, such access must adhere to certain information security requirements. These requirements also are designed to provide audit and accountability records regarding those who access the system, as well as ensuring the integrity and confidentiality of the system and data from unauthorized access.

In addition to the privacy laws referenced above, VA is required to protect the availability, confidentiality, and integrity of its information and information systems based on the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. §§ 3541-49 (repealed and replaced by the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 (FISMA), codified at 44 U.S.C. §§ 3551-58 (2014)). FISMA created a comprehensive framework for the management and oversight of information security in the federal government. *Trusted Integration, Inc. v. United States,* 93 Fed.Cl. 94, 95 (Fed. Cl. 2010). Under FISMA, federal agencies must meet certain security standards, compliance with which is monitored by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). As relevant here, FISMA pertains to responsibilities of government agencies and requires that the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) promulgate standards that agencies must follow. 44 U.S.C. § 3554. NIST has promulgated comprehensive security standards that prescribes that agencies follow a risk management framework – essentially categorize a system as low, moderate, or high risk – and select the security controls appropriate to the risk and implement them. *See* NIST Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) 200, Minimum Security Requirements

for Federal Information and Information Systems; FIPS Publication 199, Standards for Security Categorization of Federal Information and Information Systems; FIPS 201, PIV of Federal Employees and Contractors; NIST Special Publications (SP) 800-53 Rev. 4, Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations, 199 and 200).[6]

The selection of the security controls and how the agency implements them is within the discretion of the agency and VA's policies are consistent with VA's information security statutes; 38 U.S.C. §§ 5721-5728, FISMA, and OMB Circular A-130, Appendix III, *Security of Federal Automated Information Resources.* VA's implementation of the NIST guidelines are in VA Handbook 6500 and each system has its own system security plan that outlines the particular implementation in that system. *See* VA Handbook 6500.[7] Pursuant to Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12), VA is required to implement the use of Personal Identify Verification (PIV) cards for logistical access to VA networks and information systems. *See* VA Directive 0735 (October 26, 2015) (Attachment 7); VA Memo (October 17, 2011) (Attachment 8); and VA Memo (February 26, 2016) (Attachment 9). The procedures to apply for a PIV card include fingerprinting, a background check, and security training. A background investigation includes completion of an online Electronic

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[6]   NIST   standards   are   available   at: http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/PubsByLR.html.
[7] *See especially* Appendix F, Section IA-1, Identification and Authentication Policy   and   Procedures.   Entire   handbook   available   at: http://www.va.gov/vapubs/search_action.cfm?dType=2

Questionnaire for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) Application and to provide

answers to some of the questions on the OF 306 Declaration for Federal

Employment. *See* VA Handbook 0710.[8]

In addition to the PIV card, as the system is currently constructed, a POA

code is central to limiting access within VBMS only to those records a

representative has been authorized to access by a claimant. At present, the only

way to assign a POA code is through VA accreditation.   More specifically,

following completion of the accreditation process, a representative is assigned a

POA code by VAOGC. That POA code is then added to VA's internal system

(VBA Corporate Database) of accredited representatives' POA codes. Having

established a POA code in VBA's Corporate Database, when a representative is

appointed as a particular veteran's or claimant's representative, the

representative's POA code is then associated with a specific veteran's eFolder,

or that of a claimant before VA who has submitted authorization for

representation, thereby allowing the representative to access that particular

eFolder in VBMS. The POA code is utilized by VBMS in conjunction with VBA's

Corporate Database to determine the user's role as well as to limit the user's

access to only the eFolder of the claimant to which they have been granted

permission to access by virtue of their appointment as representative via VA

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[8] Available at: http://www.va.gov/vapubs/search_action.cfm?dType=2

Form 21-22a.[9]   When a representative attempts to access a record in VBA systems, the systems compare the POA code associated with that record with the POA code associated with the representative user and if they match, the systems allow access. If they do not match, the systems deny access.

As demonstrated, VBA utilizes POA codes assigned to accredited representatives to track and control access to VBMS, VA's internal claims processing system.   It is important to note, however, that the accreditation system was largely in place prior to the existence of many of the electronic systems described herein.   The POA codes created by VAOGC for internal record keeping purposes have been incorporated into those electronic systems as the systems were developed.   These systems were developed without the intent or capacity to allow access to non-accredited individuals, as only accredited representatives of claimants before the agency had such a need, as discussed in footnote 3, *above*.   These systems also universally adopted the POA codes assigned by VAOGC as the sole identifier of the accredited representative.   While VA has recently attempted to retrofit some of these

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[9] A VA Form 21-22a is not required from a private attorney representing a claimant before the Court. Instead, an RO may release a claimant's claims folder for review to his/her attorney without a signed VA Form 21-22a when the RO receives a request from OGC Professional Group VII (Court of Appeals Litigation Group) regarding representation of claimants in litigation before the Court and signed statement from the claimant authorizing VA to provide a copy of his/her claims folder to the attorney representing the claimant. *See* VA Adjudication Procedures Manual (M21-1), Part I, Chapter 3, Section B, 2.a.

systems to provide accredited representatives with access to VBMS, no process

or system is currently in place that contemplates assigning POA codes to a non-

accredited individual.[10]

It is possible to reengineer VA's electronic systems to enable access in the

future, but given VA's finite resources and the government's budget process this

would require moving resources presently allocated to improving VBMS and/or

initiatives to provide claimants remote access to their electronic claims file via the

internet. Moreover, as is discussed in the next section in greater detail, non-

accredited individuals representing VA claimants before the Court can access

VBMS in person at the RO in the same manner that they were previously able to

review the paper claims file.

4. **The Court does not have jurisdiction to determine whether, or the manner in which, VA grants remote access to claimant records because there is no right to such access; VA accreditation is a reasonable requirement for remote access given privacy and security concerns and is not required for access to the original record or practice before the Court.**

Appellant's assertion that he is prevented from responding to the RBA or

disputing the contents therein is a misrepresentation. *See* Appellant's Motion

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[10] The Secretary notes that 38 C.F.R. §§ 14.626 through 14.637 governs practice before the agency only and does not apply to representation before the Court. *See e.g.* 38 C.F.R. § 14.629 (outlining requirements for authority to "prepare, present, and prosecute claims before an agency of original jurisdiction or the Board of Veterans' Appeals"). However, the procedures and processes in 38 U.S.C. §§ 5901, 5903-5904, and Part 14 of the C.F.R. are necessarily implicated in cases in which a private attorney practicing before the Court desires *remote* access to VBMS by virtue of the fact that VA accreditation is necessary to obtain a POA code.

(May 13, 2016). Significantly, Appellant's original motion to the Court sought only "read-only access to [Appellant's] VBMS files." Appellant's Motion at 4. Appellant fails to establish that his counsel has been denied read-only access to his original file within VBMS. As discussed in the Secretary's Opposition, prior to the filing of Appellant's Motion, the undersigned counsel for the Secretary offered to arrange read-only VBMS access for Appellant's counsel at a RO location of her convenience as the Secretary has traditionally done to provide access to the original material in the RBA. However, Appellant's counsel declined to take advantage of that opportunity. *See* Secretary's Opposition at 4-5 (May 26, 2016). As Appellant's motion originally requested only "read-only access to [Appellant's] VBMS file" and that access was offered and declined by Appellant's counsel, the Secretary submits that Appellant failed to establish good cause for his motion and as such it should have been denied by the Court. It was only following the Secretary's response distinguishing read-only access to VBMS from *remote* read-only access to VBMS that Appellant then asserted that his counsel was seeking *remote* read-only access. *Compare* Appellant's Motion (no mention of the word "remote") *with* Appellant's Reply at 3, 5 (June 8, 2016).

Insofar as Appellant now suggests that *remote* access is the only "meaningful" or "reasonable" means by which he can review the original material, he appears to overlook that the Secretary is providing the same access that has always been offered to representatives before the Court. *See* Appellant's Reply at 5 (June 8, 2016). That is, representatives before the Court have always been

permitted to review the original record at a VA office and, as such, Appellant's newly-claimed "hardship" based on such a practice is wholly unsupported. *See id.* As such, Appellant fails to establish that his counsel has been denied "access" to the file as contemplated in the Court's Rule 10(d). The Secretary has provided for "read-only access to [Appellant's] VBMS file" at the RO as originally requested in Appellant's motion. Further, Appellant's counsel, when viewed collectively, are capable of the very remote access that Appellant now apparently seeks based on their Reply.

As discussed *supra*, the Secretary is not imposing the requirement of VA accreditation in order to practice before the Court as there are other available avenues for non-accredited attorneys practicing before the Court to review the original record – the same avenues that have always been available to attorneys practicing before the Court. However, if Appellant desires *remote* access to the eFolder for other members of his legal team, the accreditation process is currently the only way to provide such access in a manner that also ensures protection of VA's internal system and safeguards the privacy of millions of veterans' information. With the additional privileges of *remote* access come additional security requirements; requirements that are both reasonable and within the sole discretion of the Secretary. The Secretary notes that Appellant's counsel was offered assistance in obtaining VA accreditation for *remote* access to the original file within VBMS but declined. *See* Secretary's Opposition at 4-5

General access to VA claimant records is governed by general confidentiality and privacy rules and regulations outlined in part 3, *supra*. To the extent that there is no statutory or regulatory right to *remote* access to VA claims files, the determination by the Secretary to grant remote access to his own internal system and network, and the manner in which such access is granted, is purely discretionary. This Court has explained that where a decision is committed to the discretion of the Secretary and no manageable standards exist to evaluate that decision, the decision is committed to the Secretary's discretion absolutely, and the Court lacks jurisdiction to review such a determination. *See Werden v. West*, 13 Vet.App. 463, 467 (2000). The purpose of appellate review is to ensure that the facts found and the laws applied were appropriate. Where, as here, the decision is absolutely discretionary, it is impossible for the Court to certify whether the necessary facts existed to satisfy the applicable law. *Id.* at 467-68.

The Court has also recognized that "it is not the role of the Court to dictate to the Secretary how most effectively to administer the VA benefits system to ensure timeliness and fairness." *Ramsey v. Nicholson*, 20 Vet.App. 16, 36 (2006); *see also* 38 U.S.C. § 303 (noting that the Secretary is responsible for the "control, direction, and management of the Department"). The manner in which the Secretary administers the convenience of remote access – again, there is no right or necessity to *remote* access - to his internal claims processing system is an administrative matter that involves legal duties imposed on VA by privacy and

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information security laws and regulations and which implicates VA's ability to protect veterans' claims data. It is not a question of fact or law necessary to a decision over which the Court has jurisdiction. The agency's current procedure for granting *remote* read-only access to VBMS while also securing its system is through VA accreditation but, again, accreditation is not required for Appellant's counsel to meet her obligations to her client (to include review of his record) or to practice before the Court. Although unfettered non-VA accredited access may be more convenient and preferable to Appellant and his counsel, he has not shown that he has a legal right to *remote* read-only VBMS access without complying with the Secretary's requirements for access. As these administrative processes are committed to the sole discretion of the Secretary, the Court lacks jurisdiction over this internal matter.

More importantly Appellant has not shown that his counsel is being denied read-only access to VBMS – either in-person at the RO or remotely - and thus, he fails to demonstrate that the Secretary is not providing access to the original material in the RBA as contemplated by the Court's Rule 10(d). As it is uncontested that Appellant and his counsel have been provided read-only access to Appellant's VBMS file and the original material in the RBA contained therein, the Secretary is complying with Rule 10(d), and the Court should deny Appellant's request as unfounded.

IV. CONCLUSION

WHEREFORE, the Secretary responds to the Court's June 14, 2016, Order.

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ATTACHMENT 1

BENEFITS DELIVERY NETWORK

BDN User Access Guide

Version 1.2
November 22, 2013
Approved by: Rodney Alexander
Document Expires on: November 22, 2014

Table of Contents

Change/Revision Record

Revision #	Date	Page/Paragraph	Description of Change	Made By
1.0	3/1/2012	Entire Doc	New Document	Business Unit
1.1	6/6/2012	Introduction	Removed required for Director to approve deviations	Jessica Carriveau
1.2	11/21/2013	Entire Doc	Formatting edits	EDU

Introduction

This document has been prepared in order to facilitate the Service Center, Regional Office and other group staff in requesting system access for each defined end user role in the Benefits Delivery Network (BDN) application. This document identifies what functions are needed for each of the different positions so they have the appropriate access and security to perform their job roles.

The templates contained in this specify the **maximum** rights to be granted for each job role. A successful security policy grants end users access to a system ONLY when required to perform a job function. Rights to edit data in a system should only be given when required to perform a job function.

All access should follow the standards for access as defined in the specific application's User Access Guide. However, a user's supervisor may deviate from this guide for reasons such as operational problems or lack of specific personnel to process workload. When deviating from this guide, special consideration will be given to:

- The full capabilities of the command(s); and
- The numbers and locations within the organization of employees normally assigned the command(s); and
- The length of time the rights are granted should be limited to the minimum time necessary; and
- The current and projected workload levels; and
- Separation of duties; and
- Least privilege.

BDN Purpose

Veterans benefits data are defined as personal and corporate data collected and used for the adjudication of claims and disbursement of benefit payments to veterans and their dependents. BDN is a legacy application used for a very limited amount of veteran claims processing for Compensation Service, Pension and Fiduciary Service, Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) and financial transactions. Because claims processing is very limited in BDN, access to the application should be restricted to only those employees with a need to process claims and should not be given as a common practice.

Glossary

BDN	Benefit Delivery Network
BIRLS	Beneficiary Identification and Records Locator Subsystem (hosted at the Austin Automation Center)
CAI	Computer Assisted Instruction
CP&E	Compensation, Pension and Education
EIN	Employee Identification Number
Facility	The VACO, or any VBA RO, Network Support Center, System Development Center, Information Technology Center, or other facility housing VBA IT systems.
Facility Director	The person responsible for the operation of the VBA part of a facility in which the VBA IT system is located. This includes VBA ROs; Network Support Centers, if not colocated with RO; System Development Centers; VA Central Office; and Information Technology Centers, or any other facility housing VBA IT systems.
ISO	Facility Information Security Officer
Information Security	The protection of information assets from accidental or intentional unauthorized disclosure, modification, or destruction, or the inability to process that information.
Network Support Center (NSC)	Information technology centers located at San Diego, California, St. Paul, Minnesota, and St. Petersburg, Florida, each providing technical support to the VBA facilities within their assigned client area. These centers are responsible for scheduling and conducting security audits of their client facilities.
Password	A protected, private character string used to authenticate an identity.
Privileges	A set of authorizations/permissions granted by an authorized officer to an IT systems user to perform certain operations.
Rating Codes	A four-digit code which corresponds to a specific diagnosis of a disability rated under the VA Rating Guide.
Regional Office	Any of the VBA regional centers responsible for benefits delivery for a region of the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Philippines, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
System Access	Possession of access and authorization codes, which enable a user to log onto a system and use system-based applications and resources.
SMGW	Super Migration Gateway
User	A person or process authorized to access and interact directly with a computer system. For example, a user may be a VBA employee, a VBA contractor's employee, or a VSO employee.
VSO	Veterans Service Organization. VSOs are not authorized to have BDN access.

Definition of Benefits Delivery Network Commands

Abbreviation	Command Description	Remarks
ACCT	Finance Report command. Used only by the Finance staff at the Hines DPC.	Not for RO use
BADD	BIRLS ADD. Used to add a veteran master record to BIRLS when claims establishment is not applicable. A beneficiary master record cannot be added during the BADD command processing.	
BEVR	BENEFICIARY ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION REPORT. Used for initial processing of EVR forms. The EVR is the form on which pension and parent DIC beneficiaries report changes in income, medical expenses, dependency and net worth. The EVR form replaces the income questionnaire (IQ) card.	
BFLD	BIRLS FOLDER MANAGEMENT. The BIRLS folder command is used to access the LOC or folder management screen. BIRLS will track the following folder types: CLAIMS, NOD LIGHTWEIGHT, CH 32, CH 35, (DEA), CH 31 FOLDERS (R&E and CER FOLDERS), CONSOLIDATED HEALTH RECORD (CHR), and PARENT GUARDIANSHIP (PGF) for the General Counsel.	
BICP	BIRLS INACTIVE C & P. Used to update the ICP screen in BIRLS.	
BINQ	BIRLS INQUIRY. Used to access the BIRLS at the Austin data processing center.	
BPRT	BIRLS PRINT. Accesses the BPR or message management screen to review or print BIRLS messages within specific terminal digit arrangements. Also used to print out responses resulting from the microfilm search conducted by the RPC (See MCRI).	
BUPD	BIRLS UPDATE. Used to correct or add information to the BIRLS file.	
CADD	CHANGE OF ADDRESS. Used to change the address in the master record (CP&E) and in the PIF.	
CADJ (C&P)	CLAIMS ADJUDICATION. Used by an adjudicator to correct previously entered data in the claims processing cycle, or to enter additional information with respect to award or disallowance actions (C&P).	
CADJ (EDU)	Same as above, for Education. Used by VR&E staff to process subsistence allowance.	
CAST	CASE STATUS CONTROLS. Used to enter case status movement of CH31 claims, case status or independent future controls, and counseling data. This command is intended to show the veteran's movement through the CH31 program.	7500 series required

Abbreviation	Command Description	Remarks
CAUT (C&P)	CLAIMS AUTHORIZATION. Used to authorize or disallow an award (C&P). **Reference OFO Letter 20F-12-05	** Cannot have both CAUT and CEST (must be GS11/12 VSR or higher)
CAUT (BUR)	CLAIMS AUTHORIZATION. Used to authorize or disallow a burial claim.	Cannot have both CAUT and CEST
CAUT-EDU	Same as above for Education. Used by VR&E staff to process Chapter 31 eligibility determinations and Chapter 31 awards.	Cannot have both CAUT and CEST
CDAT	CLAIMS DATA ENTRY. Used to enter claims data into the system (including rating, dependency, and income, etc.) for original, reopened or supplemental claims.	
CDEV	CLAIMS DEVELOPMENT. Used to develop a claim when necessary information has not been received from the claimant (DD214, marriage certificate, etc.) The command issues letters to the claimant based on items requested, and tracks the request through diary dates.	
CERT	CERTIFICATION. Used to enter periodic education certification data.	
CEST	CLAIMS ESTABLISHMENT. Establishes a pending issue for an initial or reopened claim. This includes verification or assignment of a file number, recording of date of receipt of the claim, establishing a pending issue file for the claim, and other initial actions.	Cannot have both CAUT and CEST
CEST EDU	CLAIMS ESTABLISHMENT. Same as above for Education.	Cannot have both CAUT and CEST
CFID	CHANGE OF FIDUCIARY. Used to change the name of the fiduciary in the master record or PIF. CFID is required in order to use CADD in conjunction with a fiduciary case.	
CNAM	CHANGE OF NAME. Used to change the name in the master record or PIF.	
CNUM	CHANGE OF NUMBER. Used to change the claim number in the master record or PIF.	
COLL	CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT/DEBIT VOUCHER	
CORR	MASTER RECORD CORRECTION. Used to correct data in a CP&E master record.	
DIAR	DIARY. Add or delete future diary date.	
DINQ	DOD INQUIRY. Used by DOD for BDN inquiries, similar to the VHA HINQ.	Not for RO use
DISP	DISPOSITION SCREEN. Used to record the movement of a claim or claims folder through the adjudication process.	

Abbreviation	Command Description	Remarks
DUPC	DUPLICATE RECORDS CONSOLIDATION. Used to consolidate two or more BIRLS records for the same veteran. A transaction is also sent to BDN when the DUPC is processed, but no transaction is sent to corporate. Therefore, DUPC should NOT be used when more than one corporate record exists for the same veteran without coordination with Compensation Service 215A staff. A number of manual steps are required to ensure that the corporate records are properly consolidated before DUPC can be used to consolidate the BIRLS records.	
FAUT	FISCAL AUTHORIZATION. Used by the Finance Officer, Asst. Finance Officer, Chief, Operations Section, or Education to approve or disapprove a pending fiscal transaction. Also needed for the routine processing of Chapter 33 claims.	
FISA	FISCAL AUTHORIZATION. Used to enter collection data in Compensation and Pension award cases with accounts receivable.	
FIST	PAYMENT TRANSACTIONS. Special One-Time Payments, Transmittals, and PFOB/FDIB Transactions. Recurring transactions with unique codes to support Tuition Assistance Top-Up, Licensing and Certification Exams, Work-study, and Tutorial Assistance.	
FNOD	FIRST NOTICE OF DEATH. Used to process a notice of death for an established claim and to update BIRLS. It will suspend payments or stop them if a date of death is provided.	
FOES	FINANCE EXCEPTIONS. Similar to NOES, used to list exceptions to finance actions.	
FRPT	FISCAL REPORTS. Generates daily report (WIPP)	
HELP	SPECIAL PAYMENT PROCESSING. Used to process special payments on an expedited basis.	
HINQ	HOSPITAL INQUIRY. Used at VHA facilities to obtain data from BDN. A composite response (drawing data from master records and BIRLS) is sent back via the VHA email system.	Not for use
LINQ	LOAN GUARANTY INQUIRY. Used to call up information concerning property management accounts, liquidation and claims accounts, and portfolio loan accounts.	
LMOD	Access to Loan Guaranty LGY databases inquiry mode that also permits input on note screens available for viewing through LRA.	
MCRI	MICROFILM INQUIRY. Used to initiate a microfilm inquiry over the BDN to attempt to identify veteran personnel who cannot otherwise be identified in the BIRLS database with available information.	
MCRO	MICROFICHE RESPONSE. This command is used by Austin AAC to review MCRI from ROs.	
MINQ	MASTER RECORD INQUIRY (DPC Hines).	

Abbreviation	Command Description	Remarks
NINQ	NURSING HOME INQUIRY.	
NOES	NOTICE OF EXCEPTION. Used to obtain prints of notice of exception messages generated as a result of BDN claims processing.	
PCAN	PENDING ISSUE CANCELLATION. Cancels an issue in the PIF with no end product credit.	
PCHG	PENDING ISSUE CHANGE.	
PCLR	PENDING ISSUE CLEAR. A one-time action to create and order a pending issue with end product credit.	
PENF	FISCAL PENDING INQUIRY.	
PFOP	Used by Finance to disseminate a veteran's money to their dependants after veteran's death.	
PINQ	PENDING ISSUE INQUIRY. Displays information from the pending issue file (maintained at the regional DPC), which exists while the claim is pending and under development. Includes dates of processing actions (P01 screen) and dates that specific evidence (birth certificates, marriage certificates, etc.) was requested and received.	
PMCS	PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATE PROCESSING. Used to access the PMC screen to display a diary or certificate record. It is also used when requesting a print of the diary records due on a particular day. A diary or a certificate record may be established during CEST or FNOD processing. However, only a certificate record may be established using the PMCS command.	
PURG	PURGE MASTER RECORD. Used to purge a master record, and is only authorized for use by VACO.	Not for RO use
QCRE	QUALITY CONTROL AND REVIEW. Used to select cases for statistical quality review.	
QUIP (INQ)	QUAYLE INQUIRY. Used with PL 97-377 Section 156-Reinstatement Eligibility Program for Survivors.	
QUIP-UPD	QUAYLE UPDATE. Used with PL 97-377 Section 156-Reinstatement Eligibility Program for Survivors.	Not for RO use
RAUT	REFUND AUTHORIZATION. Chapter 32 educational benefits.	
RDEL	RECORD DELETE. Used to delete a BIRLS record.	For VACO and RMC use only
RESU (C&P)	RESUME PAYMENT. Used to resume suspended payments on running awards (CP&E), and, if desired, changes the address of the recipient.	
RESU (EDU)	Same as above for Education claims and Chapter 31 awards in a suspended status.	
RFND	REFUND. Chapter 32 educational benefits.	
RINQ	CHECK TRACER ACTION. Used to check the status of tracer actions.	
RUDI	Non-functional (cannot be selected by security officer).	Hines finance only
RUPD	CHECK TRACER ACTION. Used to input the tracer action.	

Abbreviation	Command Description	Remarks
SINQ	STATUS INQUIRY. Combines PINQ, MINQ, and BINQ commands. Based on the information provided, the command will first search for a pending issue, then for a master record, and finally for a BIRLS record. The first record found is displayed.	
SMIN	SMOCTA INQUIRY. Educational (Service Members Occupational Conversion Training Act).	
SMUP	SMOCTA UPDATE. See above.	
STOP (C&P)	STOP PAYMENT. Terminates a running C&P award	
STOP (EDU)	STOP PAYMENT. Terminates a running Education and running Chapter 31 awards.	
SUSP (C&P)	SUSPEND PAYMENT. Suspends payments from a running award (C&P).	
SUSP (EDU)	SUSPEND PAYMENT. Suspends payments from a running award (Education) and a running Chapter 31 award.	
TINQ	Displays payment and return check information for a veteran beneficiary from the payment history file database. NOTE - COMMAND NO LONGER IN USE	
UNAS	UNASSOCIATED INQUIRY AND CLEARANCE TRANSACTION.	
VLET	Automatically generates veterans assistance letters.	
VINQ	VETERANS INFORMATION TRACKING ADJUDICATION LOG INQUIRY. Used for inquiry access to the VITAL system.	
VUPD	VITAL UPDATE. Used for update access to the VITAL system.	
WCAN	COMPLIANCE SURVEY WORK SYSTEM WORK CANCELED. Cancels an 800 series end product without giving work credit.	
WCLR	COMPLIANCE SURVEY WORK SYSTEM WORK CLEAR. Clears an 800 series end product from the pending issue file generating work credit.	
WEST	COMPLIANCE SURVEY WORK SYSTEM WORK ESTABLISHED. Builds a pending issue for an 800 series end product. This command does not perform a BIRLS or a master record search.	
WINQ	COMPLIANCE SURVEY WORK SYSTEM WORK INQUIRY. Performs an inquiry against an 800 series pending issue.	
WIPP	WORK IN PROGRESS. Displays statistical information about pending work in BDN. Used to control workflow.	
XINF	SSA INQUIRY. Used for an inquiry of social security pay data.	
XMDC	DOD INQUIRY. Used for an inquiry of DOD pay data.	

Additional Commands

Abbreviation	Description
STAT	SYSTEM STATUS INQUIRY. Does not require a password. Displays the current availability and processing cycles for the CP&E and Chapter 31 master records and for BIRLS.
LERN	Access the BDN online computer assisted instruction system. Does not require a password. NOTE: the lessons in this system have not been updated in about eight years. The LCAI lesson lists available LERN lessons. NOTE – COMMAND NO LONGER IN USE
STUP	SECURITY TABLE UPDATE. Used by BDNSAs to manage the BDN user security access table and the BDN sensitive file.

Position Templates

Veteran Services Center – BDN EIN 1000 Through 1999

Role	VSC Supervisor	RVSR/DRO	SVSR	VSR	Claims Assistant/ Program Support Clerk	VSO
Role/Template	User	No Access	User	User	No Access	No Access
Functions 1-4						
	CADJ (C&P)		CADJ (C&P)	CADJ (C&P)		
	CAUT (C&P)		CAUT (C&P)	CAUT (BUR)		
	CAUT (BUR)		CAUT (BUR)	CORR		
	CORR		CORR	DUPC		
	DUPC		DUPC	RESU (C&P)		
	RESU (C&P)		RESU (C&P)	STOP (C&P)		
	STOP (C&P)		STOP (C&P)	SUSP (C&P)		
	SUSP (C&P)		SUSP (C&P)			

Education Services – BDN EIN 1000 Through 1999

BADD	BEVR	BFLD	BICP	BINQ
BPRT	BUPD	CADD	CADJ (C&P)	CADJ (EDU)
CAST	CAUT (EDU)*	CDAT	CDEV	CERT
CEST (EDU)*	CFID	CNAM	CNUM	CORR

DIAR	DISP	DUPC	FAUT	FISA
FIST	FNOD	FOES	FRPT	HELP
MCRI	MINQ	NINQ	NOES	PCAN
PCHG	PCLR	PENF	PINQ	PMCS
QCRE	QUIP (INQ)	RAUT	RESU (C&P)	RESU (EDU)
RFND	RINQ	RUPD	SINQ	SIRS
SMIN	SMUP	STOP (C&P)	STOP (EDU)	SUSP (C&P)
SUSP (EDU)	VLET	VINQ	VUPD	WCAN
WCLR	WEST	WINQ	WIPP	XINF
XMDC	NOES	CERT		

*CEST and CAUT may not be assigned to the same employee simultaneously.   See the note at the end of this chart.

National Call Center: Legal Administrative Specialists – BDN EIN 1300 Through 1599

BINQ	CADD	MINQ	PINQ	QUIP (INQ)
RINQ	SINQ			

VACO Use Only – BDN EIN 2000 Through 2999

BADD	BFLD	BINQ	BUPD	CADD
CORR	LINQ	MCRI	MINQ	PINQ
PURG	QCRE	QUIP (INQ)	RDEL	RINQ
SINQ	TINQ	VINQ	VUPD	WINQ
WIPP	XINF	XMDC		

Regional Counsel – BDN EIN 3000 Through 3999 (No Longer Used)

Support Services/Finance – BDN EIN 4000 Through 4999

BADD	BEVR	BFLD	BICP	BINQ
BPRT	BUPD	CADD	CADJ (C&P)	CADJ (EDU)
CDAT	CDEV	CERT	CEST	CFID
CNAM	CNUM	COLL	CORR	DIAR
DISP	DUPC	FAUT	FISA	FIST
FNOD	FOES	FRPT	HELP	LINQ
MCRI	MINQ	NINQ	NOES	PCAN

PCHG	PCLR	PENF	PFOP	PINQ
PMCS	QUIP (INQ)	RAUT	RFND	RINQ
RUPD	SINQ	TINQ	UNAS	VINQ
VUPD	WIPP	XINF	XMDC	

VHA Employees – BDN EIN 5000 Through 5999 (No Longer Used)

Office of the Director, Loan Guaranty, and Human Resources – BDN EIN 6000 Through 6999 (No Longer Used)

VSC Field/Fiduciary – BDN EIN 7000 Through 7499 (No Longer Used)

VRE – BDN EIN 7500 Through 7999

BFLD	BINQ	BUPD	CADD	CADJ (EDU)
CAST	CAUT (EDU)	CDAT	CDEV	CEST
CFID	CNAM	CNUM	CORR	DISP
FAUT	FIST	FOES	FRPT	HELP
MINQ	NOES	PCAN	PCHG	PCLR
PENF	PINQ	QCRE	RESU-EDU	RINQ
SINQ	STOP (EDU)	SUSP (EDU)	TINQ	VINQ
VLET	VUPD	WIPP		

Insurance Center – BDN EIN 9000 Through 9999 (No Longer Used)

Notes

1) All stations are authorized to assign both FIST and FAUT commands to the same employee as necessary and as workload dictates. System edits allow simultaneous assignment of the FIST and FAUT commands, while preventing a BDN user from using them together on the same veteran record. A BDN user attempting to process a FIST command and process a FAUT command on the same veteran case in the same region, will receive an screen error message.

2) The chart above reflects a long-standing prohibition against assigning the CEST and CAUT commands to the same individual. This prohibition extends to individuals who have been assigned Claims Establishment authority in non-BDN award-processing systems (i.e. SHARE). The prohibition applies to CAUT-C&P, CAUT-BUR and CAUT-EDU. Additionally, CAUT-C&P may not be assigned to employees in grades GS-10 and below (refer to OFO Letter 20F-12-05).

ATTACHMENT 2

BINQ/VID (Veteran Identification)

```
VID          XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX   SEQ NO XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX   XXXXXXXXXX
FILE NO XXXXXXXXXXX  PN XX  BR XXXX   NAME XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
SSN XXXXXXXXXXX    INS NO XXXXXXXXXXX  SVC NO XXXXXXXXX      STUB NAME XXXXXXXXX


FILE NO XXXXXXXXXXX    PAYEE NO XX     NAME XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
ASSIGN FILE NO AS X CLAIM OR X SSN    CLAIM FOLDER LOCATION XXX XXXXXXXX
SOCIAL SECURITY NO    X XXXXXXXXXXX  DATE OF DEATH         XXXXXXXXXX
INSURANCE FILE NO      XXXXXXXXXXXX  CAUSE OF DEATH        XXXXXXX
INSURANCE POLICY NO    XXXXXXXXXXXX  DEATH IN SVC          X
DATE OF BIRTH          XXXXXXXXXX    POSITIVE INDICATION   X XXX
SEX                    X             POWER OF ATTORNEY     XXX
SERVICE NO(S)          XXXXXXXXX     XXXXXXXXX     XXXXXXXXX    PG IN THEATER
EOD                    XXXXXXXX      XXXXXXXX      XXXXXXXX     START XXXXXX
RAD                    XXXXXXXX      XXXXXXXX      XXXXXXXX     END   XXXXXX
BRANCH OF SVC             XXXX          XXXX          XXXX      DAYS  XXXX
CHARACTER OF SVC          XXX           XXX           XXX
SEP REASON CODE          XXX           XXX           XXX
PAY GRADE                XXXX          XXXX          XXXX
NON-PAY DAYS             XXX           XXX           XXX


CONTESTED DATA X    DELETE RECORD X     VADS X      VERIFIED X
                                                    NEXT  SCREEN XXX
```

MINQ

```
M00        MASTER RECORD INQUIRY SCREEN SELECTION     XX-XX-XX
   FILE NUMBER XXXXXXXXXX XX     BENEFIT TYPE XXX    NAME X X XXXXX


                      COMPENSATION AND PENSION
M01 DEDUCTION/RECEIVABLE DATA          M14 C&P M/R ANNUAL INCOME DATA
M11 C&P MASTER RECORD STATUS           M15 C&P MONTHLY INCOME & MISCELLANEOUS
M12 C&P MASTER RECORD AWARD DATA       M16 C&P DEPENDENCY DATA
M13 C&P MASTER RECORD RATING DATA
                          EDUCATION
M01 DEDUCTION/RECEIVABLE DATA          M26 CH32/903 PARTICIPANT ACCOUNT SUMMARY
M21 EDUC MASTER RECORD                 M27 CH32/903 CONTRIBUTION HISTORY
M22 EDUC MASTER RECORD AWARD DATA      M28 CH32/903 DOD CONTRIB AND MISC DATA
M23 EDUC ELIGIBILITY/ENTITLEMENT       M29 CH32/903 BENEFIT HISTORY
M24 EDUC MISCELLANEOUS DATA            M30 EDUC ASSISTANCE/SECTION 901
M25 ABBREVIATED EDUC MASTER RECORD


                  VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND COUNSELING
M32 CH31 MASTER RECORD STATUS          M36 CH31 AWARD DATA
M33 CH31 ENTITLEMENT/DIAGNOSTIC        M37 CH31 DEPENDENCY DATA
M35 CH31 ENTITLEMENT HISTORY           M38 CH31 FUTURE CONTROLS/RECEIVABLES
M35 CH31 CASE STATUS/COUNSELING                       NEXT SCREEN XXX
```

PINQ

```
P01                    PENDING ISSUE FILE CLAIM STATUS
        FILE NUMBER 999 99 9999-00         END PRODUCT 280      NAME I M

  VETERAN STUB        I M RESER       IRA M RESERVIST      CLAIM HISTORY
  PAYEE STUB          I M RESER       258 CAMPUS AVE       11-16-99 ESTABL
  ESTABLISHMENT                                            11-16-99 ADJUDI
  POWER OF ATTY       NONE            AMES IA
  CLAIM TYPE          1606                           50014
  CLAIM DATE          10-31-99
  SUSPENSE DATE       12-16-99
  SECTION/UNIT        2111
  CLAIM JURIS         307
  FIDUCIARY FILE      LOC
  CLAIM LOCATION          11-16-99  GAP -ADJUDICATION
  FOLDER LOCATION
  EMPLOYEE NO.
  EMPLOYEE NAME       PROCESSOR C

                                                         NEXT SCREE
  14C PENDING AUTHORIZATION
```

TINQ

```
T01                        TREASURY INQUIRY SCREEN                10-01-90
FILE NUMBER        01 010 010   PAYEE 00    NAME  JOHN B SMITH            |
LAST ACTIVITY DATE 09-19-90                 LAST MICROFICHE DATE
                           PAYMENT DATA
  TYPE      AMOUNT  PAY DATE  ZIP-CODE    ADD LINE 1      ADD LINE 2     RO
CH30      1048.00  12-04-90  70001      4001 ROPE DR  FT WORTH TX        49
CH30       122.27  10-30-90  70001      4001 ROPE DR  FT WORTH TX        49
CP-RECUR    76.00  12-01-90  70001      4001 ROPE DR  FT WORTH TX        49
CP-RECUR    76.00  11-01-90  30080       526 CAPE RD  CARTERSVILLE GA    16


                           RETURNED CHECK DATA
  ISSUE DATE       AMOUNT      CANCEL DATE      CHECK #   REASON        TYPE



    20-29     EARLIER PYMTS/RTN-CKS            LATER PYMTS/RTN-CKS
                                                          NEXT SCREEN
DSJ,T01
```

ATTACHMENT 3

November 17, 2000

VBA Letter 20-00-44

Director (00)
All VACO Services and Offices and all Regional Offices and Centers

Subj: Moratorium on Changes to the Benefits Delivery Network (BDN)
        Compensation and Pension (C&P) Application

1. This memorandum establishes a moratorium on changes to the Benefits Delivery Network's (BDN) Compensation and Pension (C&P) application on the Bull and IBM mainframes. Waivers will be granted if the change is specifically related to developing code required for the conversion to Veterans Service Network (VETSNET), for resolving a production or hardware problem, or for an annual cost-of-living adjustment. The moratorium will begin December 1, 2000, and be in effect for the remainder of the BDN's life.

2. This moratorium is established to limit the unnecessary expense of critical resources and to focus these resources on Veterans Benefits Administration's (VBA) number one Information Technology (IT) priority – implementing VETSNET C&P. VBA does not have sufficient resources to maintain two computing environments. In addition, as we are finalizing plans for conversion from the BDN to VETSNET C&P, we want to minimize the complexity of this effort.

3. Waivers will be considered and will be evaluated in terms of the cost-benefit to VBA. Waivers should be submitted with the Project Initiation Request (PIR) to the PIR Mailbox. Waivers for software changes will be evaluated as shown in the attachment. OIM and the business sponsor will review the PIR, the estimated level of effort to implement the change, and the impact to VETSNET and other planned work and decide whether to implement the change. The Under Secretary for Management will resolve PIRs when OIM and the business sponsor cannot agree.

4. New legislative requirements that require changes to the C&P BDN systems are not automatically excluded under this waiver. We will investigate alternate means of implementing new C&P legislation either procedurally, or using the VETSNET, Internet, Data Warehouse, or a LAN application.

5. If you have questions please contact Thomas Lloyd, Acting Deputy Chief Information Officer, who can be reached on (202) 273-7004 or Sally Wallace, VETSNET Implementation Program Manager, who can be reached on (202) 273-7015.

                                    /s/
                                Joseph Thompson

Enclosures

BDN C&P Moratorium
Waiver Request Procedures

October 27, 2000

- Waiver requests for changes to the BDN Compensation and Pension applications should be forwarded to the "**VAVBAWAS/CO/RAT**" mailbox accompanying the Project Initiation Request for consideration.

- Waivers will be evaluated as described below and a recommendation made to the Chief Information Officer. The Chief Information Officer will review and discuss the recommendation with the requesting Service of the recommendation. The Deputy Under Secretary for Management will resolve disagreements.

- Production problem fixes or the annual cost-of-living adjustments do not need waivers. All legislatively mandated changes requiring changes to the BDN must submit a waiver if it is not practical to use VETSNET, Internet, the Data Warehouse or a LAN application. BDN code required for the conversion to VETSNET (e.g., conversion runs) will be approved by the VETSNET Implementation Program Management Officer.

- The attached is the waiver template to be submitted with the PIR. Also attached is the evaluation that will be performed on this request. Complete and specific information will provide for a quicker turn around of these requests.

- Questions may be directed to Sally Wallace on 202-273-7015

BDN C&P Moratorium
Waiver Request for BDN Changes
(to accompany Project Initiation Request (PIR))

Side 1 To Be Completed by the Requestor

Date: [Date of request.]

Project Sponsor: [C&P, Resource Management, etc.]

Application Name: [Name or title of application that would be changed.]

Description of Desired Change:

[A description of the modifications/changes required on the BDN. Extract from PIR]

Desired Implementation Date:

Services' Assessment as to whether the change can be implemented in the VETSNET environment, the Data Warehouse, the Internet or a LAN application.

[Describe whether or not change can be incorporated to these environments]

Impact of Delaying Request until it can be incorporated into VETSNET C&P?

[Address business impacts due to delay.]

Services' Estimate of FTEE and level of effort to implement change on BDN:

[Estimate of how many FTEE and how many weeks to incorporate change]

BDN C&P Moratorium
Waiver Request for BDN Changes
(to accompany Project Initiation Request (PIR))

Side 2 To Be Completed by Office of Information Management (20S)

PCL Number:

OIM Assessment as to whether the change can be implemented in the VETSNET environment, the Data Warehouse, the Internet or a LAN application.

[Describe whether or not change can be incorporated to these environments]

OIM Estimate of FTEE and level of effort to implement change on BDN:

[Estimate of how many FTEE and how many weeks to incorporate change]

OIM Estimate of the Lines of Code that would have to be changed on the BDN:

OIM Estimate of the Lines of Code that would have to be written to accommodate change in VETSNET environment, the Data Warehouse, the Internet or a LAN application.

OIM Estimate of the Lines of Code that would have to be transferred to VETSNET at a later date.

OIM Recommendation: (Approve/disapprove)

CIO Recommendation: (Approve/disapprove)

ATTACHMENT 4

STAKEHOLDER ENTERPRISE PORTAL
USER GUIDE

U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Table of Contents

Click specific section title below to navigate to section

❖ Indicates that the SEP feature is available only to Accredited VSO Users at this time.

1.0 Overview

Veterans Relationship Management's (VRM) Stakeholder Enterprise Portal (SEP) provides a fully functional and secure entry point for external stakeholders, business partners and service providers to access web-based systems, information and services on behalf of Veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). SEP establishes a common enterprise identification and authentication service for VA internal and external stakeholders and provides a portal for VA enterprise stakeholders to manage enterprise content.

This manual is a step-by-step guide on SEP features. We recommend that you check periodically for guide updates to ensure that you learn of new features as they become available. **For further information and other issues not covered in this user guide, please call the SEP dedicated support line at 1-855-225-0709, or work with the Change Management Agent (CMA) in your local Regional Office (RO).**

Do you need more help with topics in this user guide? Click here to check out the SEP FAQs.

1.1 Pre-Check Hardware, Software, and Identification

SEP has the below minimum hardware and software requirements for full functionality:

1. Operating Systems: Windows XP or Windows 7

    - How to check: Right Click "My Computer" → Select "Properties." This may vary by Operating System.

2. Web Browsers: Internet Explorer (IE) v9, v10, v11, Firefox, or Google Chrome

    - How to check: Open Internet Explorer. Click onto "Tools" → Select "Help" → Select the "About" icon to display your IE version. This may vary by Web Browser.

3. ActivIdentity (v 6.2 for Windows 7) card reading software (Required only for users logging in with a PIV card.):

    - How to check: Select "Start" → Select "All Programs" → Find "ActivIdentity" → Find "ActivClient" → Select "User Console" and double click to open the program → Select "Help" from the title bar → Select "About" and find ActivIdentity.

Click User Console
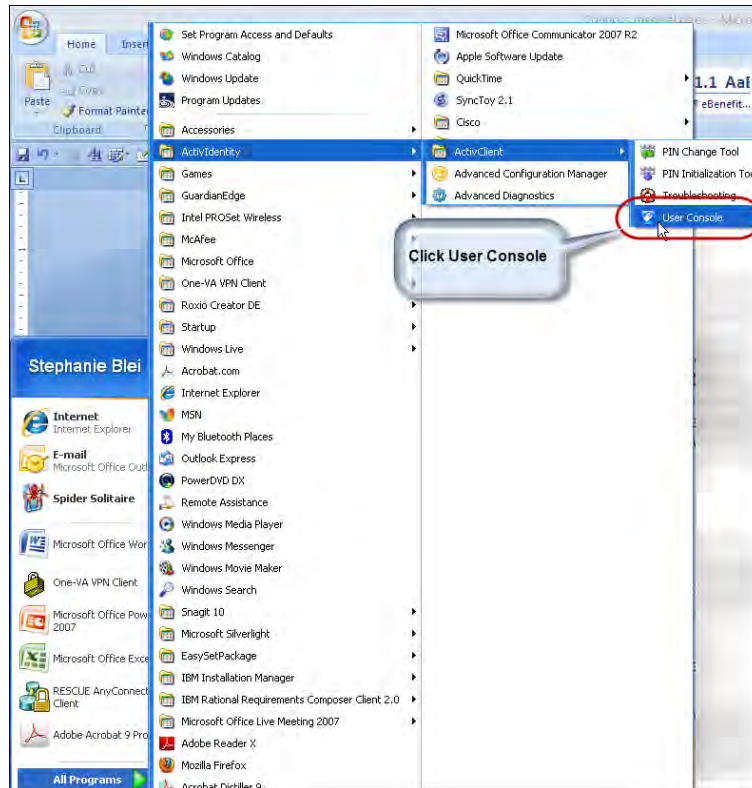
4. Valid Personal Identity Verification (PIV) card and Personal Identification Number (PIN) for the PIV Card. (Required only for users logging in with a PIV card.)

5. PIV card reader slot located on the side of laptop, on the keyboard of a desktop, or external connected by USB. (Required only for users logging in with a PIV card.)

6. Use the following instructions to obtain your Office of General Counsel (OGC) Accreditation number:

- Link to or copy URL (http://www.va.gov/ogc/apps/accreditation/index.asp) into your Web browser. Select the appropriate type of person, enter your last name into the last name field, and select the "Search" button.

- In the OGC Database, click onto your name to obtain your Accreditation number. Copy or retain the Accreditation number. When you log into SEP, you will enter the number in the OGC Accreditation field.

- Users who cannot access the OGC database to obtain their Accreditation number should contact the OGC at ogcaccreditationmailbox@va.gov.

2.0 Clear your Cache

To ensure security and protect privacy, you should clear your Web browser cache or history daily.

Follow the below instructions to clear your Web browser cache or history in Internet Explorer:

1. Open Internet Explorer.

2. From the top menu, click onto "Tools" and select "Internet Options."
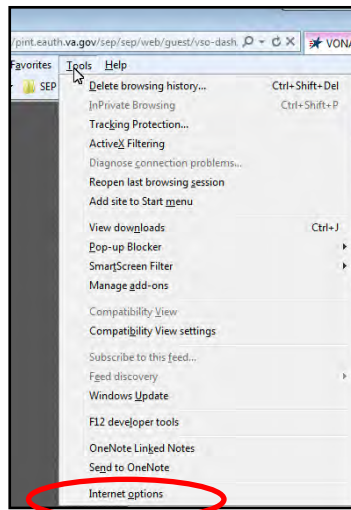
3. Select "Delete." (The Delete function will clear the history, cookies, and cache in your Web browser.)
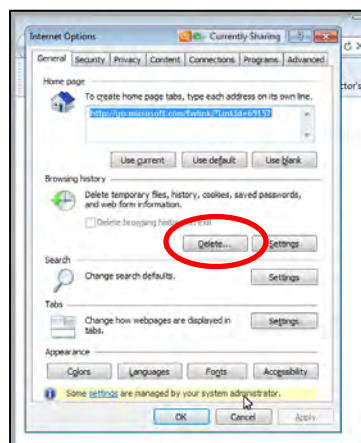
4. External network (non-VA) users should select the appropriate check boxes and click onto the "Delete" button. Note that VA's secure network does not permit its users to delete Web browser history.
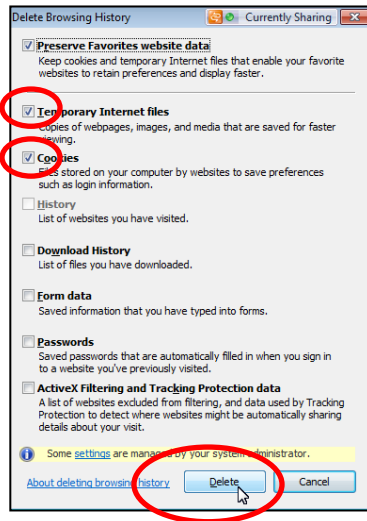
5. Exit the popup screen.

3.0 Unauthenticated Chat

The unauthenticated chat feature allows SEP users to communicate directly with National Call Center agents during their online session. The unauthenticated chat feature allows users to ask general questions while the users are not logged in to SEP. Note that the users should not provide sensitive or Personally Identifiable Information (PII) during an unauthenticated chat session. A SEP user can initiate a chat session with a National Call Center agent for assistance when selecting a page on SEP where an unauthenticated chat window is available.

1. When accessing the SEP Home Page, click onto the link, "Live Chat for Registration and Log in Difficulties." A separate chat box will appear.
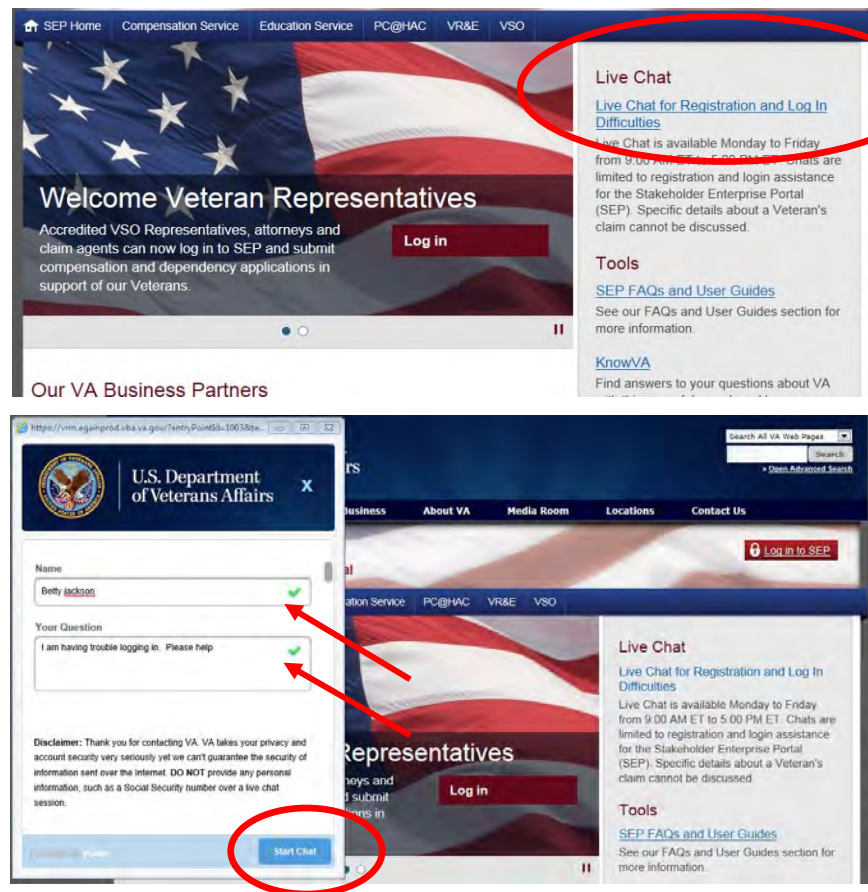
3. Enter your name and question into the applicable text boxes and click onto "Start Chat." The Chat window will first direct you to Fast Answers, in which the user may find the answer to a question without chatting with a representative. If the user does not find the answer they are looking for, the user can click "Start Chat" to proceed to chatting with a live National Call Center agent.
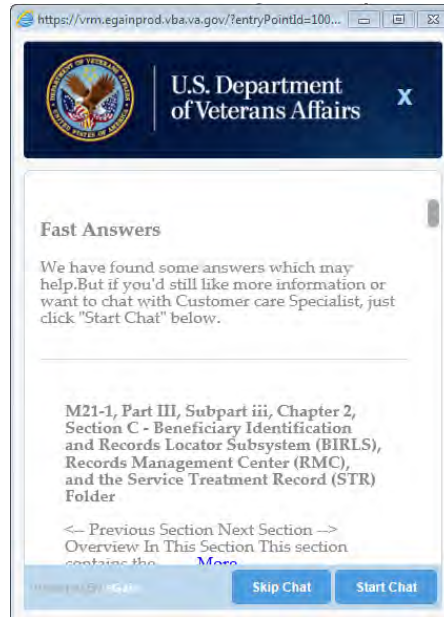
NOTE: SEP users and chat agents should not enter Personally Identifiable Information (PII) (e.g., Social Security Number or date of birth) into the chat window.
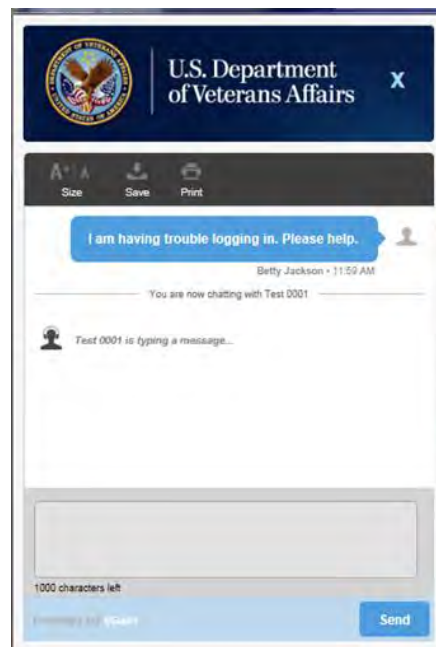
4. A chat agent will receive the message and initiate contact with the user.

5. To finish a chat session, click onto the large 'X' located at the top of the chat window, and confirm your intent to close the session by clicking "OK" in the popup window.
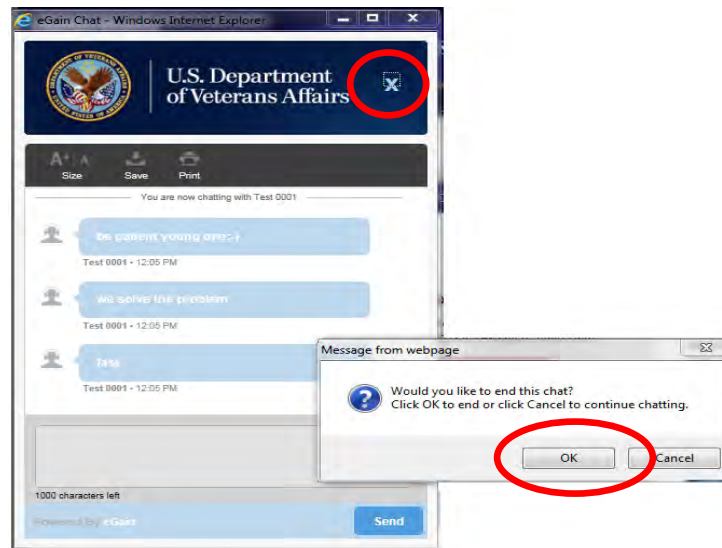
6. To help us improve SEP chat, we ask users to complete a survey. After completing the survey, click onto "Send" button.
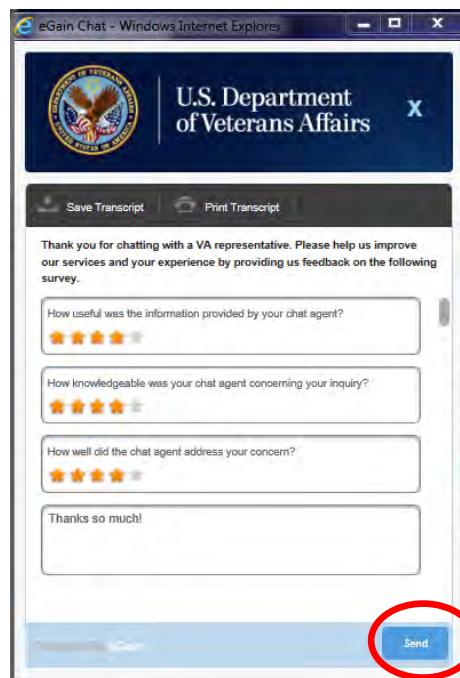
4.0   Create an Account and Log In

Accredited users can use their Personal Identity Verification (PIV) cards or Norton Symantec Remote Identity Proofing process to create accounts. Users may find Symantec login procedures by clicking here for the Symantec Job Aid page.

4.1   Register a PIV

We recommend that you ensure that your PIV card and PIN function properly prior to registering your PIV Card. To ensure that your PIN card and PIN function, insert your PIV card into the PIV card reader, enter the PIN associated with your PIV card, and log in or unlock your VA Windows Domain user profile. If your PIV and/or PIN do not function properly, please work with your PIV Sponsor or the local PIV office to resolve any problems before moving forward with registering your PIV card.

1. Insert your PIV card into your card reader.

2. Launch the ActivClient console from the Windows Start menu.
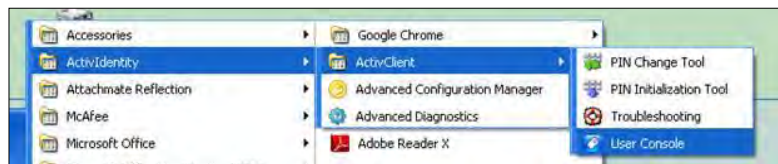
3. Click on "Tools" → "Advanced" → "Make Certificates Available to Windows."
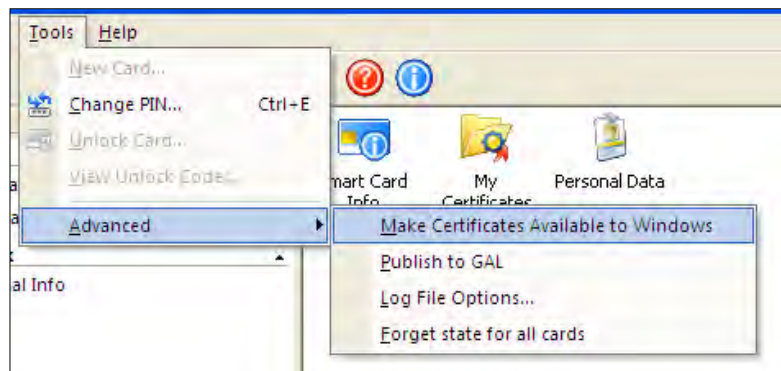
4. Close ActivClient.

5. Launch your Web browser and link to or copy and paste (**https://register.eauth.va.gov/**) into the Web browser**.**

6. You will be asked to choose a certificate. Hover your mouse over your name and select the certificate that states "PIV Authentication." Click "OK."
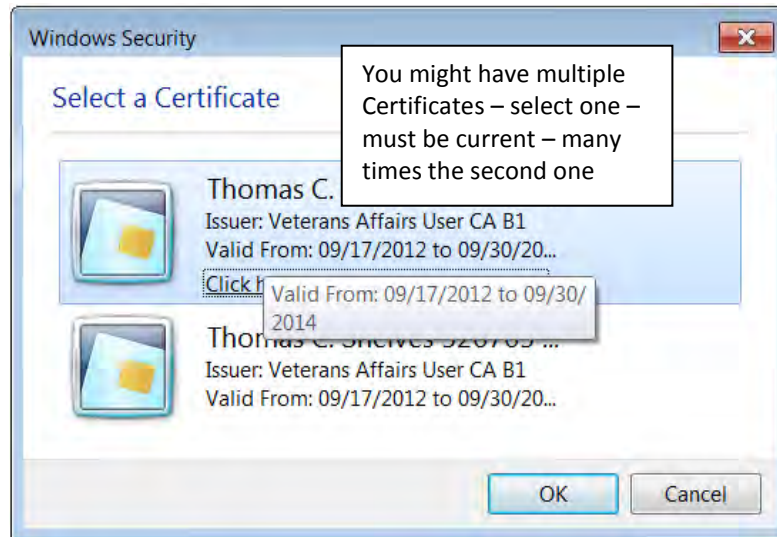
- **Helpful Hints:**

  - Do not select a certificate that displays a symbol. Select only a certificate that displays a symbol.

  - If you receive an error with one certificate, try another certificate.

7. Enter your PIV PIN and click the "OK" button.
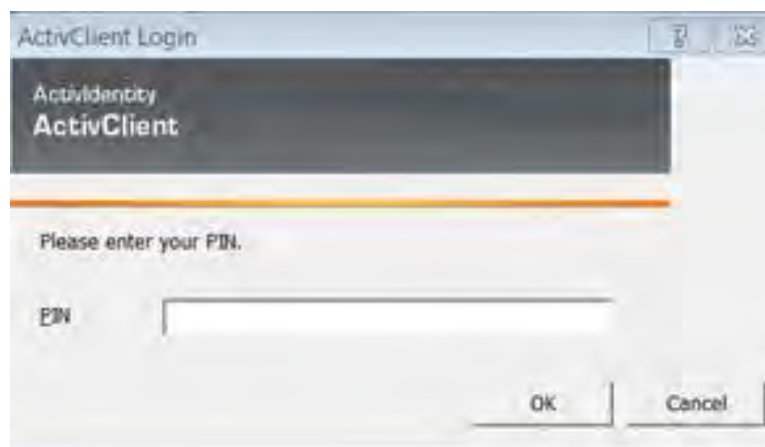
8. Click "Register Smart Card" on the right-hand side of the screen.

9. After a successful registration, your name and a message indicating successful registration will appear on the left-hand side of the page.

- When logging into SEP, should you receive the error screen below, clear your cache (Section 2.0), close your Web browser, and reattempt your PIV card registration (Section 4.1). If you continue to receive the same error message, contact the SEP dedicated support line at 1-855-225-0709, or the Change Management Agent (CMA) in your local Regional Office (RO) to resolve the problem.

skip to page content
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs PIV/DoD CAC CSP No PKI

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs PIV/DoD CAC CSP No PKI

This U.S. Government Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) Credential Service Provider (CSP) only accepts Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Personal Identity Verification (PIV) cards and Department of Defense (DOD) Common Access Card (CAC) for authentication. If you have a valid VA PIV card or DoD CAC, you must register it here.

WARNING NOTICE:

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Quick Links

- Register PIV or CAC

- VA Help Desk

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - 810 Vermont Avenue, NW - Washington, DC 20420

10. Close the Web browser.

4.2   Register with Remote Identity Proofing: Obtain Norton Symantec Credentials

As an alternative to using a PIV card to log into SEP, you may log into SEP with Norton Symantec credentials.

1. To start the process of credentialing through Symantec, click the following link or copy and paste the URL into a new Web browser: **https://www.sep.va.gov**

2. Click onto the login button. You will be prompted with a pop-up detailing the Login Process. Click to "Continue" to proceed.

Continue Login Process
You will now be directed to AccessVA, where you can enter your username and password to log in to SEP. You will then be redirected to SEP.

Close   Continue ➤
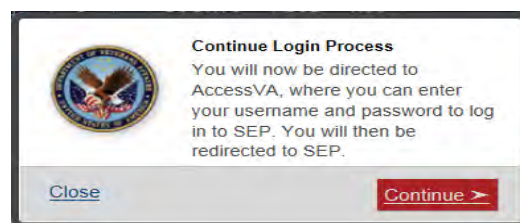
3.   The SEP login page will appear. Click onto the "Register for a Sign-in partner" link located under "Log in with Norton Symantec."
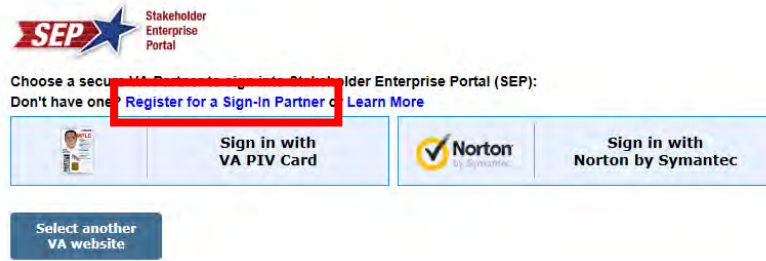
4. You will be prompted with a pop-up detailing the register process. Click to "Next" to proceed through each screen.
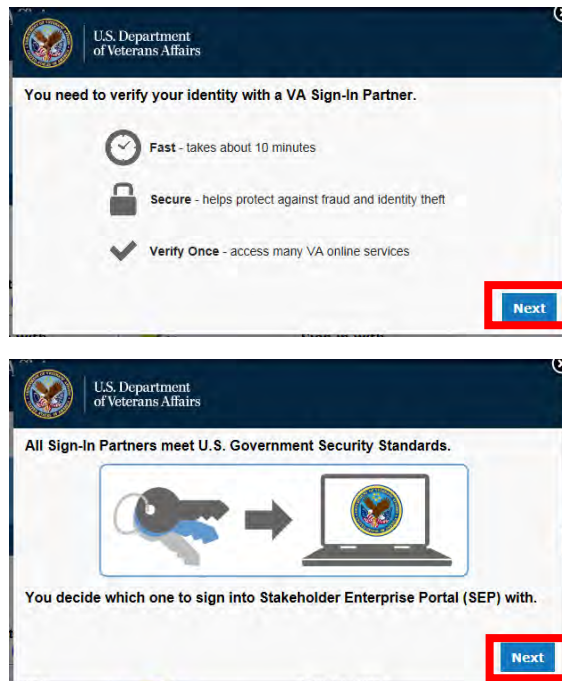
5. You will then be prompted with a pop-up slecting which Sign-in Partner to register with. Click to "Register for Norton by Symantec".
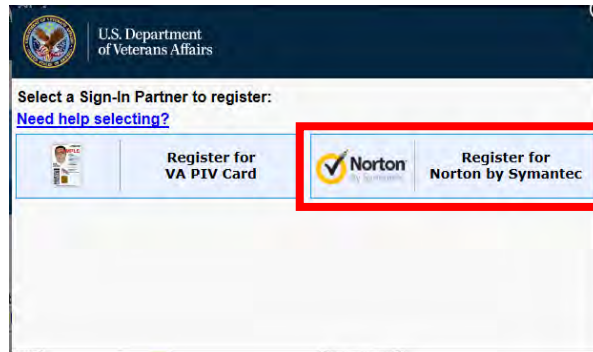
6. You will be prompted with a pop-up detailing the Login Process. Click to "Next" to proceed. The Norton Symantec account sign-in page will appear. Click "Next".
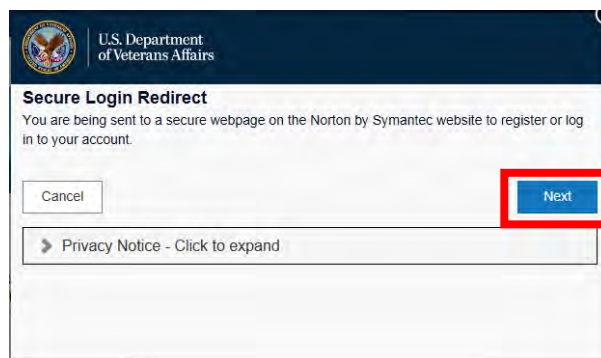
To complete the Symantec registration process, click here for the Symantec Credential User Guide.

4.3   Log in as a SEP User

1. Click the following link or copy and paste the URL into a new Web browser:

   https://www.sep.va.gov

2. Click onto the login button. You will be prompted with a pop-up detailing the Login Process. Click to "Continue" to proceed.
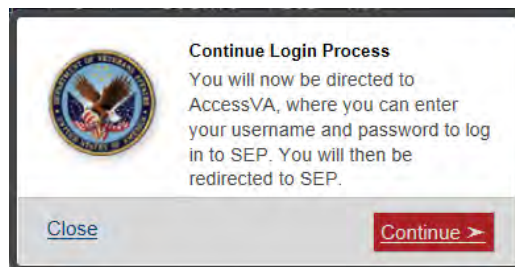
3. The SEP login page will appear.
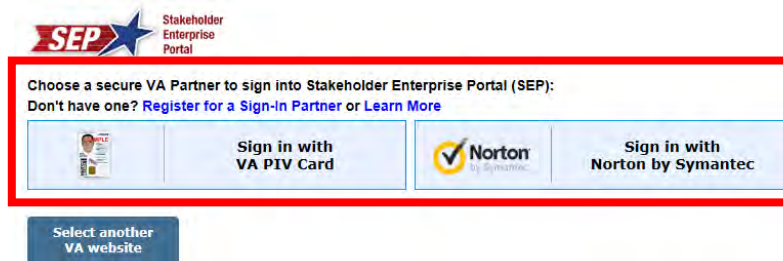
- Note that when you click your respective log in button, you will be prompted with a Secure Login Redirect pop-up. Click "Next" to proceed with your log in.
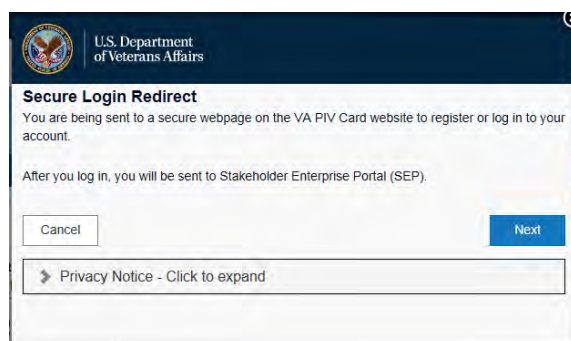
4. If you log in with a PIV card, SEP will ask you for your PIV credentials and PIN number via ActivClient. If you log in through Symantec, the system will redirect you to the Symantec login page where you may provide your Symantec login credentials.

5. When logging into SEP with your PIV card and PIN, should the screen below appear, clear your cache (Section 2.0), close your Web browser, and reattempt your PIV card registration (Section 4.1). If you continue to receive the same error message, contact the SEP dedicated support line at 1-855-225-0709 or the Change Management Agent (CMA) in your local Regional Office (RO) to resolve the problem.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs PIV/DoD CAC CSP No PKI

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs PIV/DoD CAC CSP No PKI

This U.S. Government Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) Credential Service Provider (CSP) only accepts Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Personal Identity Verification (PIV) cards and Department of Defense (DOD) Common Access Card (CAC) for authentication. If you have a valid VA PIV card or DoD CAC, you must register it here.

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Quick Links

- Register PIV or CAC

- VA Help Desk

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - 810 Vermont Avenue, NW - Washington, DC 20420

6. After your first login attempt, the below VA User Account Confirmation screen will appear, where you must complete information that is required for you to access SEP. Note that first, middle, and last name, and e-mail address and country are read from your PIV card. If information is incorrect, please resolve the inaccuracy with your PIV Sponsor or local PIV office.

- Helpful Hint: The Date of Birth format is mm/dd/yyyy.

7. After completing the VA User Account Confirmation, you will receive the following confirmation message.

8. Click onto the ⬛OK button. The system will return you to the login screen, where you must log into SEP (Section 4.3) in order to continue your session.

9. After successfully logging in with either PIV or Symantec credentials, the system will direct you to the SEP web application corresponding to your user role: VSO, Claims Agent or Attorney. Your role will appear in the upper right hand corner of the SEP browser screen.
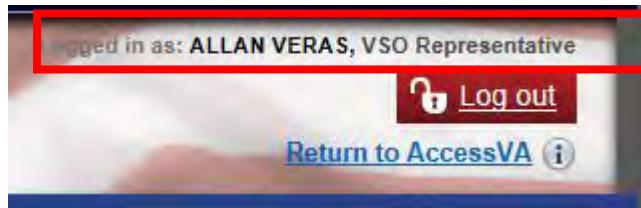
10. The SEP welcome page should appear. Enter your OGC Accreditation number. (Refer to Section 1.1 of this guide for instructions on how to obtain your OGC Accreditation number.)

11. Click onto the "Continue Registration" button. The screen should display all of your user roles and POA associations.

12. Click on the "Finish Registration" button.

13. After logging into SEP, the Dashboard screen seen below should appear where you may search for Veterans. (Should you need assistance while conducting a search, contact the SEP dedicated phone number located in the upper right-hand corner of the page.)

Need more help? Click here to check out our FAQ's on SEP Login.

Users having trouble with registration or with logging in with a PIV card should call the National Service Desk at 855-673-4357, and, when prompted by the automated menus, select Option 6 for specialty services and Option 2 for PIV support.

5.0 Manage Form 21-22

1. Accredited VSOs will use SEP to manage electronic 21-22 requests if the VSO is authorized to accept or decline POAs.

2. To search for, manage, or review incoming 21-22s, the accredited user should select the "Representation Requests" option located in the upper navigation bar.

3. A Veteran cannot electronically submit a 21-22 to a VSO who has been inactive in SEP for over 30 days. This ensures that the Veteran does not submit an application to a VSO who does not use SEP; therefore, his or her application will not go unnoticed.

4. A Veteran cannot submit an electronic 21-22 without personal contact information. This ensures that the SEP User is provided with at least one quick and easy way of contacting the Veteran.
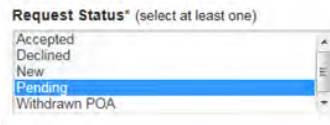
5.1 Search for 21-22s

The Representative Requests search function enables an accredited VSO user, using search criteria, to find 21-22s submitted by Veterans who requested the VSO organization as their representative. To make multiple selections, hold the Ctrl key while clicking selections.

Helpful Hints:

- "Requested Organization" and "Requested Status" are required fields to conduct a search.

- If the VSO user represents only one organization, the organization will automatically appear, and the VSO user will not be able to select additional organizations.

- You can search 21-22s using five "Request Status" criteria. There are four non-withdraw types (Accepted, Declined, New, Pending) and one withdrawn type (Withdrawn POA).

  a. You may search one or more non-withdrawn types at a time.

  b. You may not search both non-withdrawn and withdrawn types at the same time. (Withdrawn POA is a mutually exclusive search criterion)

- When searching for New, Pending, Accepted, or Declined 21-22s, you can improve your search results by selecting Domestic, Military, or International Locations as search criterion. In addition, if you select a U.S. state, you may use the city name (or multiple city names, separated by commas) to improve your search results. If selecting multiple states, hold the Ctrl button located on the keyboard when selecting each state.

- When searching by Military Location, you must select both the Claimant's Post office and the Claimant's Postal Code. To select multiple selections, hold the Ctrl key while clicking selections.

- When searching by the location type "International," you will improve your search results if you use the Claimant's Country as a search criterion. To select multiple selections, hold the Ctrl key while clicking selections. To select all International Requests, click on the "Select All" button.

- You must use valid search criteria to receive successful search results for Veterans who have requested POA (21-22s) and/or withdrawn POAs (21-22s).

- For 21-22s requests, search results will return information about the Veteran or Claimant, Limitations of Consent (if applicable), (VSO decision) Request Status, and, when the VSO has accepted the Veteran's request for POA, the responsible VSO representative name and decision date.

- To open the 21-22 Detail page within the Request Search Results, click onto the Veteran's name.

- SEP users cannot view the detail page of a Veteran or Claimant who has a withdrawn POA request (e.g., when a Veteran removes the VSO organization as his/her POA or requests a POA through another VSO organization).

5.2   Save a Search / Recall a Saved Search

Accredited SEP users will find it helpful to save frequently-used searches for easy referral.

1. After conducting a search, select the "Save Search" option, name the search, and save it to your list of saved searches.

- You can save up to ten (10) searches that only you who saved the search can view.

Use a Saved Search

Select a link below to populate the search form with previously saved search criteria.

🔍 AL Accepted

🔍 AL Pending

2. To recall the parameters of a saved search, select the saved search on the right of the search form.

- Because the pre-populated search form stored the saved search criteria, you may re-run a search without reentering the search criteria.

Fields marked with an asterisk are required fields. For best results, please fill out all fields displayed.

Requested Organization* (select at least one)

American Legion
Disabled American Veterans

Request Status* (select at least one)

Accepted
Declined
New
Pending
Withdrawn POA

Claimant's Location Type

⊙ Select All
○ Domestic
○ Military
○ International

Use a Saved Search

Select a link below to populate the search form with previously saved search criteria.

🔍 AL Accepted

🔍 AL Pending

3. You are limited to up to ten (10) saved searches. To delete saved searches, hover your mouse over the saved search name and select the "Delete" button.

5.3   View 21-22 Detail

1. The accredited VSO user can use the 21-22 detail page to research issues and make informed decisions. The detail page includes the following information: Veteran information, Claimant Information, Limitations of Consent, Change of Address, etc.

Detail for: 6/30/2012 New Request
Capone, Anthony Jay requesting AMVETS

Action: [ACCEPT REQUEST] -or- [DECLINE REQUEST]   Go back to search results

Viewing History
You are the first VSO Representative to view this request.

Claim Information

Date Request Received	6/30/2012
Request Status	New
Sharing of PHI	Not Authorized
Limitations of Consent	Drug Abuse, Infection with HIV, Sickle Cell Anemia
Change of Address	Not Authorized

Veteran Information

Veteran Name	Capone, Anthony Jay
VA File Number	XX-XXX-123
Social Security Number	XXX-XX-1234

2. The "Request Status" in the detail page of the 21-22 provides valuable information:

- A "New" status indicates that the SEP user is the first to view the new 21-22, including the 21-22 details page.

- A "Pending" status indicates that other SEP users have reviewed the 21-22, but that they have not taken action.

- The "Accepted" and "Declined" statuses inform the SEP user that an action has been taken, and of that action's date and time.

5.4   Accept or Decline 21-22

Only SEP users who are authorized to accept or decline 21-22s on behalf of their organization are able to see the "Accept Request" and "Decline Request" buttons at the top of the 21-22 detail screen.

- Important: In order to accept or decline a 21-22, the SEP User must be authorized to do so within the OGC Database. If a SEP user is unable to accept or decline a 21-22, the SEP user must coordinate with their organization and the OGC Accreditation to become authorized to accept or decline a 21-22. OGC Accreditation can be contacted at AccreditationMailbox@va.gov.

1. To accept or decline a 21-22, select one of the options at the top of the detail screen.

Action: [ACCEPT REQUEST] -or- [DECLINE REQUEST]   Go back to search results

2. To confirm that you accept a 21-22, select the "Accept Request" button at the bottom of the popup screen.

3. When you click the "Accept Request" button, the system revalidates your user identity and treats your acceptance as a virtual signature.

4. After confirming your acceptance of the 21-22, the detail page will reload and display the 21-22's new status, as well as the Veteran's File Number and Social Security Number.

   • The Veteran or claimant will receive a message through a secure messaging center located in their eBenefits account that his/her 21-22 POA request was accepted.

   • You may return to the 21-22 search results screen and evaluate other 21-22 requests.

5. To decline a 21-22, select the "Decline Request" button at the top of the detail screen.

   • You must provide a reason for declining a 21-22. After providing a reason, click onto the "Confirm" button to finalize your decline action.

Please confirm your declination of this representation request.

Veteran: Capone, Anthony Jay
Requesting: AMVETS

Reason:

Required field

Cancel | CONFIRM

6. After you confirm your decline action for the 21-22, the 21-22 detail page will reload and display its new status.

- The Veteran or claimant will receive a message through a secure messaging center located in his/her eBenefits account that the 21-22 request was declined.

- You may return to the 21-22 search results screen and evaluate other 21-22 requests.

6.0   SEP Dashboard

After the SEP user successfully logs in, the system will direct the SEP user to the VSO Representative

Dashboard, where the user may search for Veterans.

- Note the difference in the screen below. Because a VSO has more authorized roles, an

  Attorney or a Claim Agent has less functions within SEP than that of a VSO Representative.

6.1 Search for a Veteran

You may use the SEP Representative Dashboard's search criteria to locate Veterans for whom you have a POA. (The POA gives permission to an authorized SEP User to represent and/or manage a Veteran's VA-related business.)

1. From the SEP Dashboard screen, enter the following:

   • Veteran's Social Security Number, File Number, Service Number, or Insurance Number. (Only one criterion is necessary.)

   or

   • Veteran's First Name, Last Name, and Date of Birth (DOB) (All criterion required)

2. You may use "**Advanced Search Criteria**" to enhance your search for finding a Veteran.

3. If you select "**Clear Form**," all of the entered Veteran information will clear from their fields, and you will remain on the Dashboard screen.

4. After entering the Veteran's information, click onto the "**Search for Veterans**" button.

5. The Veteran Search Results will then appear with partial identifiable information.

6. Click onto "**Actions**" to view the Veteran's profile.

7. To search for a different Veteran, click onto "**Change Search Criteria**" to return to the Representative Dashboard.

   a) Note that you must click onto "Clear Form" before inputting the next Veteran's search criteria in order to remove information of prior search.

6.2   Authenticated Chat

You may communicate directly with a National Call Center agent through an authenticated chat box window located within the SEP Portal. You may ask VA-related questions, including those that are sensitive, regarding a Veteran. Note that questions must pertain to the Veteran whose information appears in the Dashboard screen at the time of the chat session.

To initiate an authenticated chat regarding another Veteran, you must exit the existing chat session, start a new search for a new Veteran, and once the Veteran's information appears in the Dashboard screen, re-initiate a new chat session. To initiate an authenticated chat, see the directions below.

- **IMPORTANT: Do not enter Personally Identifiable Information (PII) regarding the Veteran into the chat box window. The National Call Center Agent will have the Veteran's information available when you initiate a chat session.**

1. Once the Veteran's Record appears in your Representative Dashboard, click onto the "Chat with the VA" blue icon located on the bottom right of your screen.
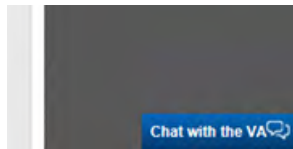
2. A popup window will appear where you may initiate a chat session with a National Call Center Agent. Type your name and your question into the window, and click the "Start Chat" button.

- **IMPORTANT: Do not enter Personally Identifiable Information about the Veteran into the chat box window. The National Call Center Agent will already have the Veteran's information available when you initiate a chat session.**

3. You will be connected to a chat room where a live agent will be available to take your questions.

4. To end the chat session, click onto the "X" located in the blue panel at the top of the screen. A popup screen will appear. Click onto OK when prompted.
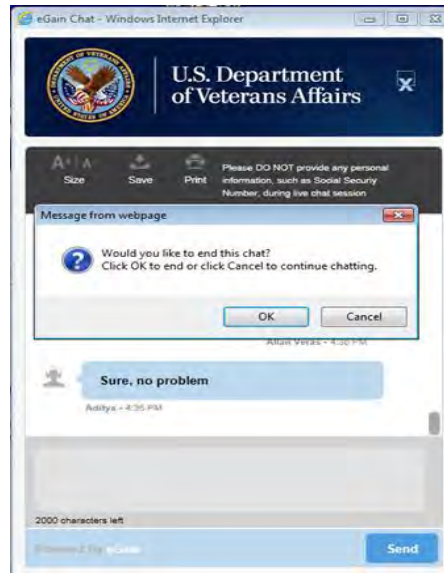
6.3 Claim Status and Document Upload

A SEP user (e.g., VSO, Attorney, or Claims Agent) can view and act on a Veteran's Compensation/Dependent claim if the Veteran grants the SEP user Power of Attorney (POA) through VA form 21-22.

1. To view a Veteran's Claim Status, select the "Claim Status" option from the "Actions" drop-down menu located in the "Veteran Search Results" screen.

2. The system will display a Work in Process page with Intent-to-File (ITF), Open Applications, and Claim Status of Submitted Claims.

3. Click the subject (Intent to File, Open Applications, Open Claims) to expand the table of each subject.

- An ITF signifies that the SEP user (on behalf of the Veteran) or the Veteran has submitted partial information in support of a claim, and that the user or Veteran needs additional time to gather the outstanding information or documentation required to complete a fully developed claim. The ITF section in the "Claims in Process" screen informs the user of the ITF's Received Date, Type, Expiration Date, Source, and Status. Click here to learn more about the ITF.

3. To view "Historical claims" for the Veteran, select "Historical Claims" on the left-hand side panel.

4. The items that display a ⚠ are urgent or past due. To view the claim's status, click onto the date of the claim.

5. In the "Claim Details" screen, click onto "Needed from You" or onto "Needed from Others" to view the list of documents that the user will need to upload to support the Veteran's claim.

6. A list of requested documents, along with the documents' statuses, will appear.

7. Click onto "Upload Document" to upload the requested documentation.

8. Click onto "Browse for Files" to locate and select the file to upload. When browsing for files to upload, user may select multiple files. There is no need to upload one file at a time.

9. After selecting the files to upload, click onto the "Select a Description" drop down list to select the documentation type for each file upload.

10. Select "Upload Documents." The screen will display a progress bar showing the progress of the upload.

11. A success screen should appear.

Files

File	* Type	Actions
☑ Submitted to VA: 214142.pdf Mon Jul 20 11:22:18 EDT 2015	VA Form 21-4142 - Authorization To Disclose Information	
☁ Browse for files		

⊕ Upload Documents   👍 All Done

12. After uploading a file, the user may browse for additional files to upload by clicking onto "Browse for Files" and selecting the additional file(s).

13. For an additional verification that the document upload was successful, click onto "All Done" to return to the Claim Status page. On the "Claim Status" page, click onto the tab "All Uploaded Documents." A tabbed screen will appear listing the documents uploaded into the Veteran's profile.

Note: Documents uploaded here may not be available to VA for 24 hours.

| Needed from You (0) | Needed from Others | **All Uploaded Documents** |

All documents submitted after January 25, 2015 are shown below.

⧉ Document Name	⧉ Document Type	⧉ Submitted	⧉ By
PMEDs Baptist Rehab.pdf	Outpatient treatment records from Personal Physician	12/17/2014	
PMEDs St Vincent.pdf	Outpatient treatment records from Personal Physician	12/17/2014	

Don't see a document listed? Check our Unsolicited Items page to see if it was received by VA.

6.4 My Profile

The left-hand side navigation panel within the Claims screen enables the SEP user to navigate easily to functional areas, including to the "My Profile" page. On the "My Profile" page, the SEP user can view information on Veteran's benefits, Representative, and disabilities. The information within these links mirrors that information the Veteran accesses in the eBenefits portal.

1. Click onto the "Personal Information" to view the Veteran's eBenefits username and the e-mail address associated with the Veteran's eBenefits account.
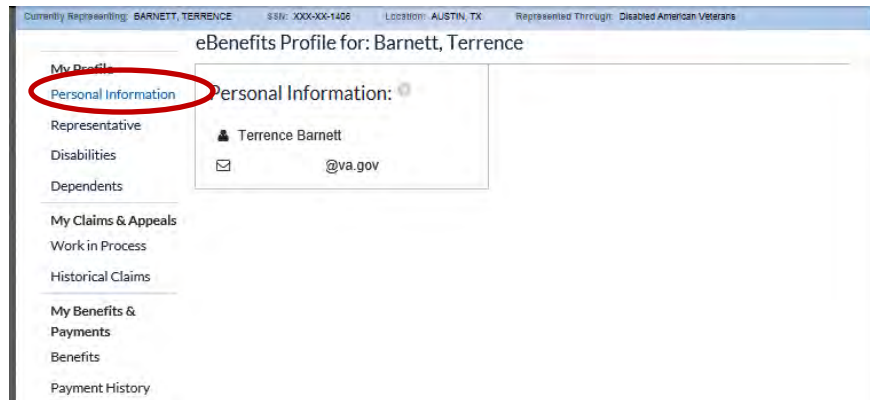
2. Click onto "Representative" to view the Veteran's Representative information.
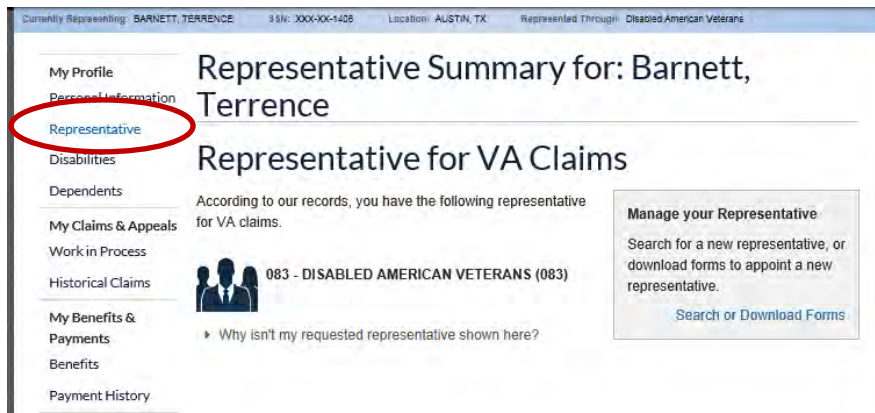
3. Click onto "Disabilities" to view a summary of the Veteran's disabilities. A SEP user is able to view the Veteran's Total Combined Disability, Rated Disabilities, and Pending Disabilities claimed. Notice that the page also links to a web page that allows the user to add Disabilities.

- Note that if a Veteran does not have pending disabilities, the Pending Disabilities section will populate with the below message.

4. Click onto "Dependents" to view a summary of the Veteran's Dependents. A SEP user is able to view the Veteran's Dependent Status and Dependents on an Award. Notice that the page also links to a web page that allows the user to add or remove dependents.

5. Note that if a Veteran or SEP User has submitted a claim for dependency benefits that has not yet been awarded, the SEP user will see the below message:

6. If the Veteran does not have dependants on the award, the SEP user will see the below message:

7. To show Dependents in which the Veteran is not currently receiving benefits for on an award, click onto "Show Dependents not on an Award."

6.5 Additional Benefits Summary

A SEP user is granted the right to perform certain functions on behalf of the Veteran for whom they have POA. For example, the SEP user may access additional benefits for the Veteran or for that of his/her dependents.

1. To view additional benefits for Veterans, select "Additional Benefits Summary" from the "Actions" drop-down list. The "Actions" drop-down list is found in the "Veteran Search Results" panel.
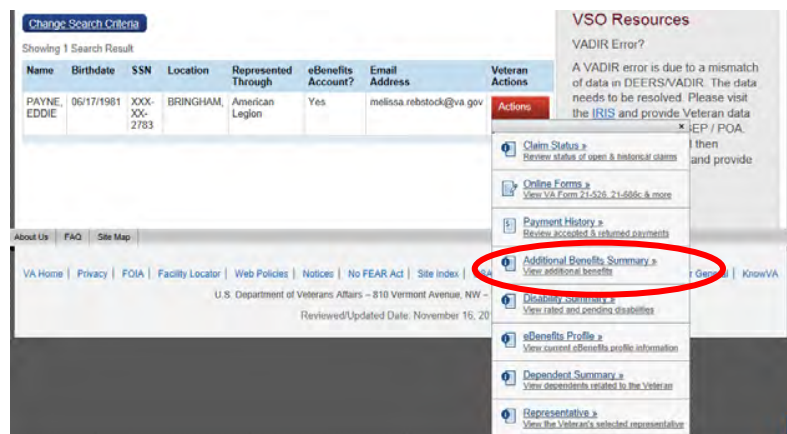
2. Additional Benefits include Eligibility Determinations; Supplementary Benefits; and Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Benefits. Details for each can be expanded by clicking the ⊞ symbol. If there are no awarded additional benefits, the "Benefits" table will be blank.

3. If the Veteran is eligible for benefits, the table will display Eligibility Determinations.

- If a Veteran has applied for an Eligibility Determination, but he/she has **is not eligible** for that benefit, SEP will display the below message.

- If the Veteran has applied for Eligibility Determinations, but a **decision has not been made**, the SEP display the following message.

4. If the Veteran is entitled to Supplementary Benefits, the table will display those Supplementary Benefits.

Benefits

Supplementary Benefits

Below is a summary of the supplementary benefits you were approved for. If you do not see a benefit you applied for listed below, it may still be under review and a decision has not yet been made. Please also check Other Decisions before calling.

Extension of Vocational Rehabilitation Benefits

Entitled to Extension of Ch31 Delimiting Date - Extension of Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Benefits - Entitled to an extension of basic 12-year period of eligibility, which is your delimiting date for receiving vocational rehabilitation and employment benefits. This is based upon your last qualifying period of active duty or the date you were notifed by VA of a service connected disability rating. Learn More

Special Home Adaptation

Entitled to Special Home Adaptation. Learn More

- If a Veteran has applied for a Supplementary Benefit, but he/she has **not been awarded** that benefit, SEP will display the below message.

Benefits

Supplementary Benefits

We have reviewed your application for supplementary benefits. Based upon our review, we have determined that you may not be eligible for certain benefits.

- If the Veteran has applied for Supplementary Benefits, but a **decision has not been made**, the SEP will display the following message.

If you do not see a supplementary benefit you applied for listed below, it may still be under review and a decision has not yet been made. Please also check Other Decisions before calling.

- In order to see benefit decisons, the SEP User may click onto the "Other Decisions" link, which will direct the SEP user to the list of denied benefits.

Other Decisions for: Curtis, Travis

Unfortunately, we were not able to grant you the benefits listed below.

For questions about your benefits, please contact the Department of Veterans Affairs:

- **By Phone:*** 1-800-827-1000 (711 if you use a TDD)
- **Online:** Use our Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS)

*Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 9:00 pm ET

Supplementary Benefits

Auto or Adaptive Equipment
Not entitled to Automobile Grant of up to $20,114.34 or Adaptive Equipment for your Automobile. Learn More

Education Assistance Program
Not entitled to Basic Eligibility under the Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance Program. Learn More

5. If the Veteran is entitled to Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Benefits, the table will display the Benefits. If the Veteran has not applied for these benefits and would like to, the user may request Education/Vocational Counseling and/or apply for Vocational Rehabilitation. You can click the ⊕ symbol to expand the topic.

Benefits
⊟ Vocational Rehabilitation and Education   **Learn More**
⊕ Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program
⊕ Education/Career Counseling

- Once expanded, you should see "Vocational Rehabiliation and Employment Program" and "Education/Career Counseling." Click ⊕ by either or both to expand. If the Veteran has not previously applied for Chapter 31 or requested Education/Career counseling, there will be buttons in this section to allow the user to do so.

- Note that if the Veteran has applied recently, the option to apply will not be available. However, a message that includes the date of submission of the request will be shown.

Below is the status of your benefit:

Your latest request for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment program was submitted on 09/03/2015. We will notify you soon about next steps.

Contact VR&E Division

- To apply for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Education Program, click the **Apply for Chapter 31** button. Since this form is integrated, the Veteran's information will already be populated. To apply on the Veteran's behalf, simply click **Apply** after confirming the Veteran's information.

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Application

We may need to contact you to discuss next steps before we can process your application for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment benefits. Please verify your personal and contact information below. Follow the instructions if you need to make updates.

Personal Information

Name: TERRENCE A BARNETT

Gender: Male

Date of Birth: 06/14/1932

Social Security Number: XXX-XX-1406

VA File Number: XXX-XX-1406

If any of your personal information is incorrect, contact VA at 1-800-827-1000 (711 if you use TDD), Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 9:00 pm ET. You can also submit a question to VA's Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS) and receive a response within five business days.

Contact Information

Address: 12345 LAMPLIGHT VILLAGE AVENUE, AUSTIN, TX 78717

Primary Email: arathi.mayasamudram@va.gov

Primary Phone: (512) 774-4998

Secondary Phone: (555) 123-1234

Are you moving within the next 30 days?
○ Yes
◉ No

Do you want to apply for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment?

[Apply]   [Exit]

- Note that if the Veteran's information is incomplete, the following message will appear. The user will not be able to apply through SEP until the missing information has been updated.

Contact Information

⚠ Some of the Veteranâs contact information is missing. Please ask the Veteran to update this information on eBenefits, or call VA at 1-800-827-1000 (711 if you use TDD), Monday â Friday, 8:00 am â 9:00 pm Eastern Time.

- To request Education/Career counseling, click the [Request Counseling] button. Since this form is integrated, the Veteran's information will already be populated. To apply on the Veteran's behalf, simply click [Submit] after confirming the Veteran's information.

Education/Career Counseling Request

We will need to contact you to discuss next steps before we can process your request for Education/Career counseling. Please verify your personal and contact information below. Follow the instructions if you need to make updates.

Personal Information

Name: ANDRE TEMPLETHRONE OLIVER

Gender: Male

Date of Birth: 09/12/1971

Social Security Number: XXX-XX-0489

VA File Number: XXX-XX-0489

If any of your personal information is incorrect, contact VA at 1-800-827-1000 (711 if you use TDD), Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 9:00 pm ET. You can also submit a question to VA's Inquiry Routing & Information System (IRIS) and receive a response within five business days.

Contact Information

Address: 1000 MADRID ROAD APT 102, FLORENCE, Italy

Primary Email: sillyme@gmail.com

Primary Phone: (222) 333-4444

Secondary Phone: (555) 222-1112

Do you want to submit your request for Education/Career counseling?

| Submit | Exit |

- Note that if the Veteran's information is incomplete, the following message will appear. The user will not be able to apply through SEP until the missing information has been updated.

Contact Information

⚠ Some of the Veteranäs contact information is missing. Please ask the Veteran to update this information on eBenefits, or call VA at 1-800-827-1000 (711 if you use TDD), Monday ä Friday, 8:00 am ä 9:00 pm Eastern Time.

6.6 Payment History

A SEP user is granted the right to perform certain functions on behalf of the Veteran for whom they have POA. For example, the SEP user may access the payment history for the Veteran or for that of his/her dependents.

1. To view payment history for Veterans, select "Payment History" from the "Actions" drop-down list. The "Actions" drop-down list is found in the "Veteran Search Results" panel.
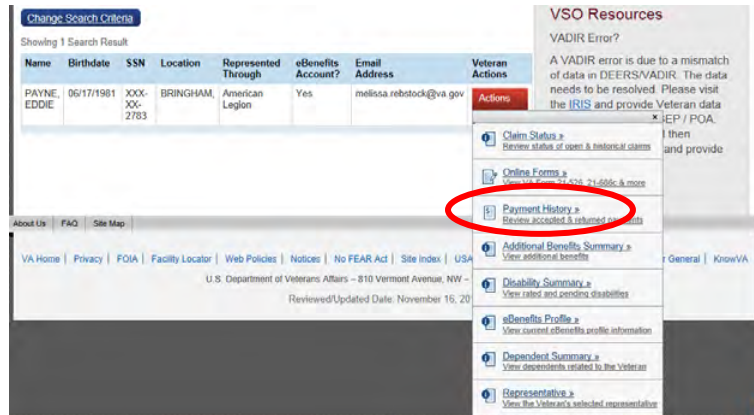
- The payment history page should appear. The system will display a default payment date range, from January of the current year to the present month. You may refine your search by using specific date range drop-downs located below the date fields. The payment history page will also display any returned payments applicable.
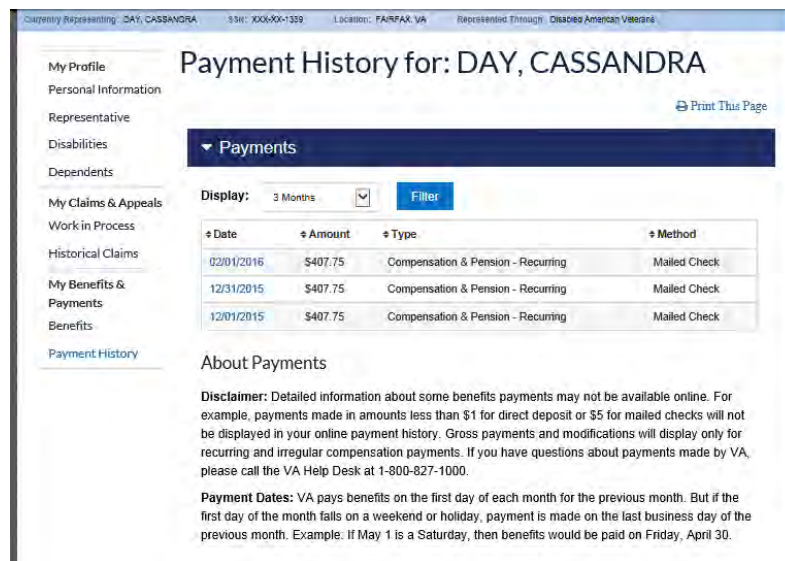
- The initial payment screen displays a summary of payments made to the Veteran, including returned payments. Select the specific payment date to view payment details. Payment details may include reductions from the gross payment, as well as bank or check payment information. At the bottom of the pages, under "About," the SEP user may find explanatory information, including payment mail dates and returned payments. Note that because the SEP user views the same data and information that the Veteran views through the eBenefits portal, the SEP user may also be able to provide contextual assistance to the Veteran.

Payment Details for PAYNE, EDDIE

Return to Payment Summary   🖶 Print This Page

Details on your Compensation & Pension - Recurring Payment

Net Payment:	$1,340.00
Date:	02/01/2016
Type:	Compensation & Pension - Recurring
Method:	Direct Deposit
Bank Name:	WACHOVIA BANK, N.A.
Account Number:	xxxxxxxxxx6789

About Payments

Disclaimer: Detailed information about some benefits payments may not be available online. For example, payments made in amounts less than $1 for direct deposit or $5 for mailed checks will not be displayed in the claimant's online payment history. Gross payments and modifications will display only for recurring and irregular compensation payments. If you (representative) or the claimant have questions about payments made by VA, please call the VA Help Desk at 1-800-827-1000.

6.7   Online Forms

The SEP users are allowed to access online forms for those Veterans who grant them Power of Attorney (POA). This process is using the same Electronic Claims Submission Process dashboard that Veterans use in eBenefits.

1. To access a Veteran's online forms, the authorized SEP user selects the "Online Forms" option from the "Actions" drop-down menu. The "Actions" drop-down menu is found in the Veteran Search Results.

The system will display the Online Application Dashboard of the selected Veteran. The dashboard will display the current summary of open, submitted, and completed applications and forms. Open applications are displayed in descending order from the newest to the oldest.

- **Note:** Forms available through SEP are identical to those available to the Veteran through eBenefits. In addition, the SEP and eBenefit web portals enable the SEP user and Veteran to interact in order to complete and submit online forms to the VA. The interactive capability between SEP and eBenefits is especially helpful when a SEP user requires a Veteran's Signature on a form (e.g., VA Form 21-526EZ). In this scenario, the Veteran can upload a signed form in PDF format through eBenefits for the SEP user's retrieval and action in SEP.

7.0 Submit Form 21-526EZ on Behalf of a Veteran

Once the Veteran's POA is in the VA system, a representative of that VSO can use SEP to prepare a disability compensation application (VA Form 21-526EZ) on behalf of the Veteran. However, the Representative may **not** be able to electronically submit the application through SEP.

2. Each VSO decides whether or not an individual representative can submit the application in SEP. While using SEP:

   - A representative **with** the right/authority to submit the application will be given that option.

   - A representative **without** the right/authority to submit the application will be able to electronically send the application for review by a representative with the authority.

3. Below are the POA types and their typical authorization, which is subject to the VSO's or Veteran's refinement:

   - Most National VSOs (NVSOs) submit a claim on behalf of the Veteran without a VSO organization's review.

   - Most, but not all, County VSOs (CVSOs) cannot submit a claim on behalf of a Veteran, even if the claim has all the necessary certification information, without a VSO organization's review.

   - Most Attorneys and Claim Agents have the same rights as NVSOs.

4. A POA may submit a claim if the Veteran provides authorization by either of the two methods:

   - The Veteran provides an electronic mark in the presence of a POA Witness, who in turn provides his or her electronic mark.

   - The Veteran provides a wet signature on the 21-526EZ signature page and the page is uploaded by the Veteran using eBenefits or by the VSO using SEP.

7.1 Verify a POA When Reopening an Existing 21-526EZ Claim

A Veteran may change representatives before an application has been submitted through SEP. Before the new Veteran Representative continues the application, the Veteran's signature or mark will need to be updated. The system generates a message explaining this situation.

7.2 Submit an Original Claim

To ensure the Representative can prepare and/or submit an original application for a Veteran, the Representative must have permission to do so. Verification of that permission can be satisfied by either uploading a signed signature page or capturing the claimant's and witness' marks.

- The SEP user who can download, print, sign, and scan a document may consider uploading a **signed signature page**.

- If the Veteran is unable to provide a signature, the SEP Representative may consider capturing the **claimant's and witness' marks**, an electronic equivalent of a mark or thumb print. When completing the "Claimant and Witness Mark" section of the claim, the SEP Representative should:

  a. Read the claimant mark statement to the Veteran;

  b. Obtain the Veteran's electronic mark "X"; and

  c. Acting as a witness, check the box certifying the SEP made visual verification that the Veteran made an electronic mark.

- **Important:** A SEP Representative must be present – either via computer screen sharing or a face-to-face interview -- when the Representative verifies the claimant's mark.

Claimant Signature or Mark

Claimant Mark

If you're unable to obtain a signed certification and signature page, you'll need to: (1) read the claimant mark statement to the Veteran; (2) have the Veteran certify by checking the first check box below; and (3) provide your signature as a witness to the claimant's mark by checking the second check box below.

Reminder: Users of the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal (SEP) (1) must continue to comply with the rules of behavior for this computer; and (2) must be present when the Veteran is checking the claimant mark.

I certify and authorize the release of information. I certify that the statements in this document are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any person or entity, including but not limited to, any organization, service provider, employer, or government agency, to give the Department of Veterans Affairs any information about me except protected health information. I waive any privilege that makes the information confidential.

☑ By checking this box, you (the Veteran) certify the above in lieu of your signature. Once your application is submitted, you will not be able to make additional changes.

Witness Mark

I certify that I am a witness to the claimant's mark, which the Veteran provided as the claim certification and signature.

☑ By checking this box, you (the representative) certify the above in lieu of your signature.

Save & Continue   Previous   Exit

Submission Procedures

1. At the end of the 21-526EZ claim application process, the SEP Representative who is authorized to submit on the behalf of the Veteran will have two options - to submit the application to the VA on behalf of the Veteran or allow the Veteran to review the application.

2. SEP Representatives that require additional VSO review will only have the option to send the application to the NVSO for his/her review.

- The user will click onto "continue" to view a draft mail that will be sent to the Veteran.

- Once the user clicks onto "Send for Review", the user will reveice a message acknowledging that the application has been sent for NVSO review.

3. When the NVSO reviews, the NVSO will have the following options:

- Submit the claim on behalf of the Veteran

- Request a Veteran review

- "Return for Additional VSO Review and Action" (e.g. Return the claim to the CVSO for additional information)

| Applicant Information | Military Service History | Disability Records | Treatment Records | Employment & Education History | Special Circumstances | Supporting Documents | Final Review & Submission |

Next Steps

** Required to Continue

Thank you for completing a draft of the Compensation Benefits Application on behalf of the Veteran. To complete the process, you can submit the application on their behalf. You can also send the application for Veteran review or return the application for additional Veteran Service Organization (VSO) review and action.

**What would you like to do next?

○ Submit on Behalf of Veteran
○ Send for Veteran Review
○ Return for Additional VSO Review and Action

Exit

Save & Continue   Previous

4. Once a SEP Representative or an NVSO submits on the behalf of the Veteran, a submission confirmation page will appear.

Disability Compensation Application

Print Incomplete Forms

Thank you for submitting the Compensation Benefits Application on behalf of {Veteran Name}.

The confirmation number is {Confirmation #}. You can view and print a copy of your completed application from the Online Applications Dashboard.

We have notified the Veteran of the status of the application. The message was sent to the following:

• eBenefits Message Center
• Primary Email: {address}
• Alternate Email: {address}

What's Included

The application and supporting documents were submitted to the VA for review by a claims agent. The submission includes the following documents:

• VA Form 21-526EZ
• Any Form
• Any Form

Next Steps

Supporting Documents
If you did not upload all of your supporting documents, you can still add them to the claim. To upload additional documents, follow the directions for each form listed below.

• **Veteran Aid and Attendance**
(1) Print the form, (2) have an examiner complete the form, and (3) add the document to the claim using the eBenefits Compensation & Pension Claims & Upload Supporting Documents feature.

📄 Download a pre-filled VA form 21-2680

• **Spouse Aid and Attendance**
(1) Print the form, (2) have an examiner complete the form, and (3) add the document to the claim using the eBenefits Compensation & Pension Claims & Upload Supporting Documents feature.

📄 Download a pre-filled VA form 21-2680 for your spouse

Get Additional Information

For additional information or assistance, call our toll-free number at 1-800-827-1000. A benefit counselor is available to answer your questions and provide you with any additional information you need about VA benefits and the claims process.

Track Your Claim

You can now track the status of your claim online. View the status of your claim. Please be aware that DBQ forms may change over the course of your claim's life due to changes in law and policy. You will NOT be required to do anything or submit additional evidence. If additional medical evidence is required to rate your claim, VA will establish a DBQ exam for you free of charge.

Learn More about the FDC Program

Don't forget to submit your claim as a fully developed claim. For more information on the FDC Program visit our website.

Related Actions

Declare or manage your dependent information.

Go to the Online Applications Dashboard

Post Submission Procedures of an Original Claim

5. If the SEP Representative submitted an application on behalf of the Veteran and captured the signature by the claimant's and witness' marks, this will be captured on the PDF version of the claim application, as shown below:

- Note that if the claimant signature was uploaded instead, there will be a separate signature page document. The Veteran and Witness signatures will be blank on the generated 526EZ.

6. Confirmation of VSO claims submission will appear in the top left header of that claim application page, as shown below:

7.3 Submit a Supplemental Claim

When the Veteran has an eBenefits account and/or email address on record in the VA system, the SEP Representative can submit a supplemental claim without obtaining the claimant's and witness' marks or uploading a Veteran-signed signature page.

When a Veteran does not have an eBenefits account and no email address on record in the VA system, the SEP Representative will need to obtain the claimant's and witness' marks or to upload a Veteran-signed signature page in order to submit a supplemental claim, as was required with the original claim. When submitting a supplemental claim for a Veteran without an eBenefits account and without an email address, the SEP Representative should refer to Section 7.2 on Submitting an Original Claim.
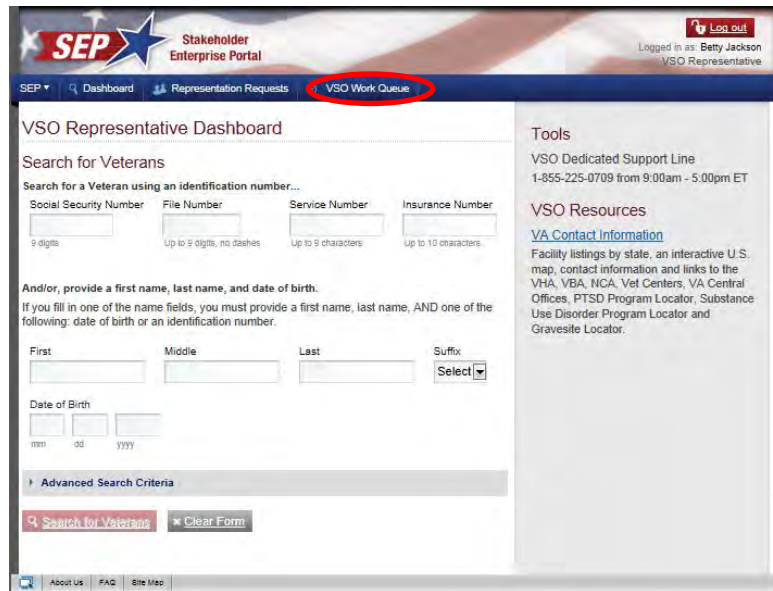
If the Representative tries to submit a supplemental application for a Veteran (with no eBenefits account and no email address on record) without uploading a signature page or capturing the claimant and witness marks, the system will generate the following message:

⚠ **You cannot submit an application on this Veteran's behalf.**

Before you can submit a claim on this Veteran's behalf, the Veteran must authorize you as a representative. To ensure that you can submit this application, return to the Claim Signature page to: (1) upload a signed claim certification and signature page; or (2) provide a claimant mark and witness mark.

**What would you like to do next?

◯ Send for Veteran Review

- NOTE: If the Representative selects "Send for Veteran Review," the system will allow the Representative to enter a temporary email address and will send a notification to the Veteran that a draft Compensation Benefits Application has been completed.

8.0 SEP Work Queue

After SEP users log into SEP, they can search for Veterans applications that have been started, but not submitted, and are in various stages of the process, by clicking onto "VSO Work Queue" located in the upper menu bar.

1. The Search for Veteran's Applications page will appear, where the user may enter search criteria to find application(s) that require their organization's action.

2. After the users have selected all their search criteria, they may click on the "Search for Applications" button located on the bottom of the Work Queue search screen.

8.1 View Work Queue Search Results

After the SEP user conducts a successful search, the work queue search results will appear in the window. Search results will display as a list of application(s) in alphabetical order and by Veteran's name. The work queue is mostly limited to informative Veteran data; however, a SEP user may choose to navigate to a pending Disability Compensation Application and continue the process of completion and submission. A SEP user may enter the Veteran's Disability Compensation Application by clicking onto the "Disability Compensation" link in the search results table.

- **Note:** A ☑(checkmark) in the "Comments" column indicates that notes have been entered for that application.

Clicking the Veteran's name link in the search results table will display the "Application Information" window and provide more detailed information for a specific application.

- **Note:** A SEP user may also access the Veteran's Disability Compensation Application from this "Application Information" window by clicking onto the "Disability Compensation" link.

9.0 SEP ForeSee Survey

In order to ensure that we are providing the best customer service experience possible, we have partnered with ForeSee to include a random survey as part of the user's SEP experience.

If you are randomly selected to take part in the survey, a window will appear requesting the user's feedback before exiting the SEP portal. If you are not selected but want to give feedback and complete the survey, please direct your comments and questions to: vrmsep.vbaco@va.gov. Note that there are a total of 24 questions in the survey; and to complete and submit a survey, the selected survey participant must complete all of the questions and click onto the "Submit" button.
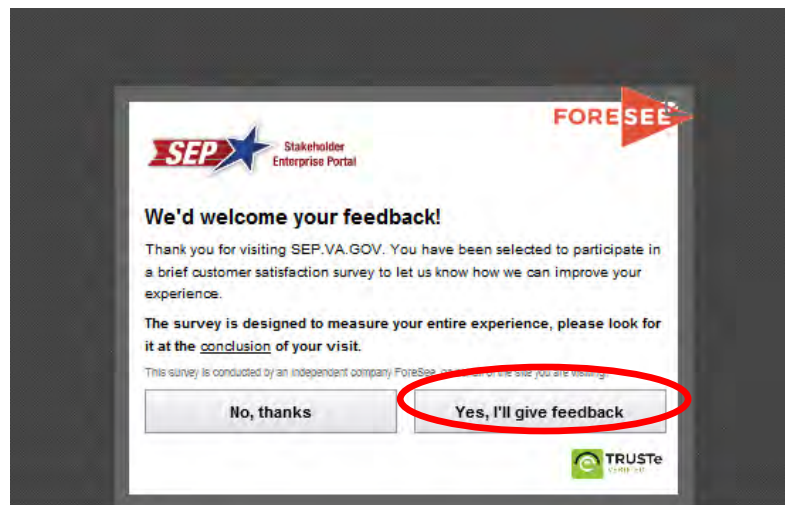
Customer Satisfaction Survey

Thank you for visiting our site. You've been randomly chosen to take part in a brief survey to let us know what we're doing well and where we can improve.

Please take a few minutes to share your opinions, which are essential in helping us provide the best online experience possible.

*Required questions are denoted by an ***

TRUSTe
EU SAFE HARBOR

1: *Please rate the **convenient placement of the website tools** on this site.

1=Poor   Excellent=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Don't Know
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

2: *Please rate the **variety of website tools** on this site.

1=Poor   Excellent=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Don't Know
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

3: *Please rate the **balance of graphics and text** on this site.

1=Poor   Excellent=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Don't Know
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

4: *Please rate the **readability of the pages** on this site.

1=Poor   Excellent=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Don't Know
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

5: *Please rate the **options available for navigating** this site.

1=Poor   Excellent=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Don't Know
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

6: *Please rate **how well the site layout helps you find what you need.**

1=Poor   Excellent=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Don't Know
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

7: *What is your **overall satisfaction** with this site?

1=Very Dissatisfied   Very Satisfied=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

8: *How well does this site **meet your expectations**?

1=Falls Short   Exceeds=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

9: *How does this site **compare to your idea of an ideal website**?

1=Not Very Close   Very Close=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

10: *How likely are you to **return to this site**?

1=Very Unlikely   Very Likely=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

11: *How likely are you to **recommend the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal** to someone else?

1=Very Unlikely   Very Likely=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

12: *How likely are you to use this site as your **primary resource for obtaining information from this organization**?

1=Very Unlikely   Very Likely=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

13: *How likely are you to **use this site rather than seeking information from other channels**?

1=Very Unlikely   Very Likely=10
1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10
○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○   ○

14: *Which of the following best describes your role in visiting the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal (SEP) site today? (Select all that apply)

☐ Veteran Service Organization (VSO)
☐ Education Provider
☐ Doctor or Other Health Care Provider
☐ Attorney
☐ Loan Appraiser
☐ Benefit Provider
☐ Other, please specify:

15: *How frequently do you visit this site?

○ First time
○ Daily
○ About once a week
○ About once a month
○ About once or twice a year
○ Less frequently than once a year

16: *For which reasons did you visit the SEP site today? (Select all that apply)

☐ Access information
☐ Submit claims on my own behalf
☐ Submit claims on a veteran's behalf
☐ Apply for benefits
☐ Check the status of a claim for benefits
☐ Check the status of an appeal for a claim for benefits
☐ Check the status of a benefit payment
☐ To view a veteran's benefit payment history
☐ Obtain a benefit verification letter
☐ Change my profile (e.g., change contact information)
☐ Just browsing/Curious what site offered
☐ Other, please specify:

17: *Which of the following areas of the SEP site did you visit today? (Select all that apply)

☐ Compensation Service
☐ Education Service
☐ Purchased Care @ Health Administration Center (PC@HAC)
☐ Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E)
☐ Veterans Service Organizations (VSO)
☐ FAQs
☐ KnowVA
☐ FAST Letters (1996 - Present)
☐ Learn More About SEP
☐ Other section not listed above
☐ Not sure

18: *Did you accomplish what you wanted to on the site today?

○ Yes
○ Partially
○ No
○ I wasn't planning to accomplish anything in particular

19: *Did you try to log in on this site today?

  ○ Yes

  ○ No

20: Thinking about the SEP homepage, was it clear where you needed to go to find what you were looking for today?

  ○ Yes

  ○ No

21: How would you describe your navigation experience on the SEP site today? (Select all that apply)

  ☐ I had **no** difficulty navigating/browsing on this site

  ☐ Too many links/navigational options to choose from

  ☐ Links often did not take me where I expected

  ☐ Had difficulty finding relevant information/products

  ☐ Could not navigate back to previous information

  ☐ Links/labels are difficult to understand

  ☐ Had technical difficulties (error messages, broken links, etc.)

  ☐ I had a navigation difficulty **not listed** above

22: *Are you aware of the VA Transformation Plan?

  ○ Yes

  ○ No

  ○ Not Sure

23: *How likely are you to **discourage** others from using the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal?

1 = Very Unlikely								Very Likely = 10	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

24: If you could identify one improvement to this site, what improvement would you suggest?

> 1,000 Characters Remaining

Thank you for taking our survey - and for helping us serve you better.
We appreciate your input!

Submit

ATTACHMENT 5

SEP **Stakeholder Enterprise Portal**

Log out

Return to AccessVA (i)

SEP ▼ | Q Dashboard | 👥 Representation Requests | ⏱ VSO Work Queue

Representative Dashboard

Veteran Search Results

Searches return Veteran records that match your search criteria, designate you as their representative for VA Claims, and meet the approved permission level.

You searched using SSN ending in **4437**

Change Search Criteria

Showing 1 Search Result

Name	Birthdate	SSN	Location	Represented Through	eBenefits Account?	Email Address	Veteran Actions
WEBBSTER , MARK	10/04/1950	XXX-XX-4437	PARIS,	American Legion	Yes	kalpana.vathaluru@csra.com	Actions ▼

Tools

VSO Dedicated Support Line

1-855-225-0709 from 9:00am - 5:00pm ET

VSO Resources

VADIR Error?

A VADIR error is due to a mismatch of data in DEERS/VADIR. The data needs to be resolved. Please visit the IRIS and provide Veteran data and choose the topic SEP / POA. The receiving team will then troubleshoot the issue and provide you a response.

SEP **Stakeholder Enterprise Portal**

Log out

Return to AccessVA (i)

SEP ▼ | Q Dashboard | 👥 Representation Requests | ⏱ VSO Work Queue

Currently Representing: WEBBSTER, MARK   SSN: XXX-XX-4437   Location: PARIS   Represented Through: American Legion

eBenefits Profile for: Webbster, Mark

My Profile

Personal Information

Representative

Disabilities

Dependents

My Claims & Appeals

Work in Process

Historical Claims

My Benefits & Payments

Benefits

Payment History

Personal Information: ⓘ

👤 Mark Webbster

✉ kalpana.vathaluru@csra.com

Disability Summary for: Webbster, Mark

My Profile

Personal Information

Representative

Disabilities

Dependents

My Claims & Appeals

Work in Process

Historical Claims

My Benefits & Payments

Benefits

Payment History

100%

Total Combined Disability

You have a 100% final degree of disability. This percentage determines the amount of benefit pay you will receive.

How is this calculated

Add Disabilities

Submit a claim to make any updates to the disabilities that you believe are related to your military service.

Apply Now.

Rated Disabilities

Disability	Rating	Decision	Related To	Effective Date
Hearing Loss	100%	Service Connected		12/31/2004
↳ alergies due to hearling loss ❓	10%	Service Connected		05/01/2012
Tinnitus		Not Service Connected		

Pending Disabilities

Disability	Submitted	Type	Actions
Fracture, Res. Of, Calcaneus	06/10/2016	NEW	

SEP ★ Stakeholder Enterprise Portal

SEP ▾ | 🔍 Dashboard | 👥 Representation Requests | ⊙ VSO Work Queue

Currently Representing: WEBBSTER, MARK   SSN: XXX-XX-4437   Location: PARIS   Represented Through: American Legion

My Profile

Personal Information

Representative

Disabilities

Dependents

My Claims & Appeals

Work in Process

Historical Claims

My Benefits & Payments

Benefits

Payment History

Work in Process for: Webbster, Mark

Your notifications of Intent to File, Open Applications, and Open Claims are shown below. They can be managed here on eBenefits before they expire.

132	2	5
Intent To File	Open Applications	Open Claims

▶ Intent to File (132)   Learn more about Intent to File

▶ Open Applications (2)   Completed Applications

▼ Open Claims (5)   Historical Claims

If a new claim is submitted while an existing claim is pending, any new information will be consolidated with the pending claim. The new claim will then be marked as Complete and moved to Historical Claims with no further action required.

⇕ Submitted	⇕ Type	⇕ Status	Updates	Actions
06/15/2016	Dependency	Claim Received		Upload Documents
06/10/2016	Compensation	Gathering Of Evidence	✉ Development Letter Sent	Upload Documents

SEP ★ Stakeholder Enterprise Portal

🔒 Log out

Return to AccessVA ⓘ

SEP ▾   🔍 Dashboard   👥 Representation Requests   ◷ VSO Work Queue

Currently Representing: WEBBSTER, MARK   SSN: XXX-XX-4437   Location: PARIS   Represented Through: American Legion

Claim Details

Return to Work in Process

Status of Your Claim

Submitted: 08/01/2015 (Compensation)

Estimated Completion: 04/27/2016 - 08/07/2016 ❓

Disabilities Claimed: toe jam (New)

Representative for VA Claims: AMERICAN LEGION

Current Status: Gathering of Evidence ❓

Mail or Fax Instructions

GATHERING OF EVIDENCE

Your Claim Will Be Decided Soon

You chose not to submit any additional information to VA that could help support your claim. VA will decide your claim as soon as possible. Thank you for your patience.

Note: Documents uploaded here may not be available to the VA for 24 hours.

| **Needed from You** (0) | **Needed from Others** | **All Uploaded Documents for this Claim** |

Optional Documents

Please submit any supporting documents. Include any documents that we requested when you submitted your application for this claim.

Upload Documents

Request 1

Due Date: 02/07/2016   **Status:** 🟠 Submitted, Awaiting Review

Upload Documents

SEP ★ **Stakeholder Enterprise Portal**

Logged in as: **BETTY JACKSON** , VSO Representative

🔒 **Log out**

Return to AccessVA ⓘ

SEP ▼   🔍 Dashboard   👥 Representation Requests   ⏱ VSO Work Queue

Currently Representing: WEBBSTER, MARK   SSN: XXX-XX-4437   Location: PARIS   Represented Through: American Legion

My Profile

Personal Information

Representative

Disabilities

Dependents

My Claims & Appeals

Work in Process

Historical Claims

My Benefits & Payments

Benefits

Payment History

Payment History for: WEBBSTER, MARK

🖨 Print This Page

▼ Payments

Display: | 3 Months ▼ | **Filter**

⬍ Date	⬍ Amount	⬍ Type	⬍ Method
06/01/2016	$3,017.60	Compensation & Pension - Recurring	Direct Deposit
04/29/2016	$3,083.74	Compensation & Pension - Recurring	Direct Deposit
04/01/2016	$3,134.32	Compensation & Pension - Recurring	Direct Deposit

About Payments

Disclaimer: Detailed information about some benefits payments may not be available online. For example, payments made in amounts less than $1 for direct deposit or $5 for mailed checks will not

ATTACHMENT 6

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Strategic Plan to Eliminate the Compensation Claims Backlog

U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

Table of Contents

Introduction

The Obama Administration has shown unwavering commitment to serve Veterans. VA has completed a record-breaking 1 million claims per year the last three fiscal years. But too many Veterans have to wait too long to get the benefits they have earned and deserve. These delays are unacceptable. This report outlines VA's robust plan to tackle this problem and build a paperless, digital disability claims system – a lasting solution that will transform how we operate and ensure we achieve the Secretary's goal of eliminating the claims backlog and improving decision accuracy to 98 percent in 2015 – to deliver faster, better decisions for Veterans.

The first section describes the compensation claims backlog.

The second section describes the VBA's Transformation Plan to improve personnel performance, redesign business processes, and replace paperbound and manual systems with digitized and automated ones.

The third section identifies two potential future factors that could further increase our claims volume over the three-year period, FY 2013 through FY 2015, and how we will address these challenges.

The fourth section focuses on performance management.

Finally, we provide more specific information on the Veterans Benefits Management System in the appendix to this document.

Section 1: The Backlog

VBA completed a record-breaking 1M claims per year in fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012. Yet the number of claims received continues to exceed the number processed. In 2010 VBA received 1.2M claims. In 2011, VBA received another 1.3M claims, including claims from Veterans made eligible for benefits as a result of the Secretary's decision to add three new presumptive conditions for Veterans exposed to Agent Orange. In 2012, VBA received 1.08M claims. Over the last three years, the claims backlog has grown from 180K to 594K claims as of the end of December 2012.

For decades, the VBA system has carried an inventory of pending claims, and a backlog that was ambiguously defined and sometimes confused with inventory. In 2010, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs defined the backlog as any disability claim over 125 days old.

The number of service-connected disability claims grows during periods of armed conflict and economic downturn. The backlog also grows when policymakers establish new presumptive conditions, courts make new decisions, and legislators make laws that establish new entitlements.

In 2009, the Secretary made the decision to add three presumptive conditions (Parkinson's disease, ischemic heart disease, and B-cell leukemias) for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam or were otherwise exposed to the herbicide Agent Orange. Beginning in 2010, VBA identified these claims for special handling to ensure compliance with the provisions in the Nehmer court decision that requires VA to re-adjudicate claims for these three conditions that were previously denied. Nehmer claims for all live Veterans were completed as of April 2012. VA identified the next of kin for the last remaining Nehmer survivor claim and awarded benefits in October 2012. To date, VA has awarded over $4.4 B in retroactive benefits for the three new Agent Orange presumptive conditions to more than 150K Veterans and survivors

Many other factors have had an impact on the backlog, including initiatives to increase access and increased demand due to national security strategy and the economy:

Increased Access

1. Increased use of technology and social media by Veterans, families, and survivors to self-inform about available benefits and resources
2. Improved access to benefits through the joint VA and DoD Pre-Discharge programs
3. Additional presumptive decisions resulting in more claims for exposure-related disabilities
4. Extensive and successful use of VA outreach programs encouraging more Veterans to submit claims

Increased Demand

1. Ten years of war with increased survival rates, resulting in more claims
2. Post-conflict downsizing of the military
3. Impact of a difficult economy
4. Growth in the complexity of claims decisions as of result of the increase in the average number of medical conditions for which each claimant files

Section 2: The VBA Transformation Plan

VBA's transformation is demanded by a new era, emerging technologies, the latest demographic realities, and a renewed commitment to today's Veterans, family members, and survivors. In the face of dramatically increasing workloads, VBA must deliver first-rate and timely benefits and services – and they must be delivered with greater efficiency. VBA is aggressively pursuing its Transformation Plan, a series of tightly integrated people, process, and technology initiatives designed to eliminate the claims backlog and achieve our goal of processing all claims within 125 days with 98% accuracy in 2015. VBA is retraining, reorganizing, streamlining business processes, and building and implementing technology solutions based on the newly redesigned processes in order to improve benefits delivery.

This integrated approach to people, process and technology in the VBA Transformation Plan will eliminate the backlog of disability compensation claims by the end of fiscal year 2015.
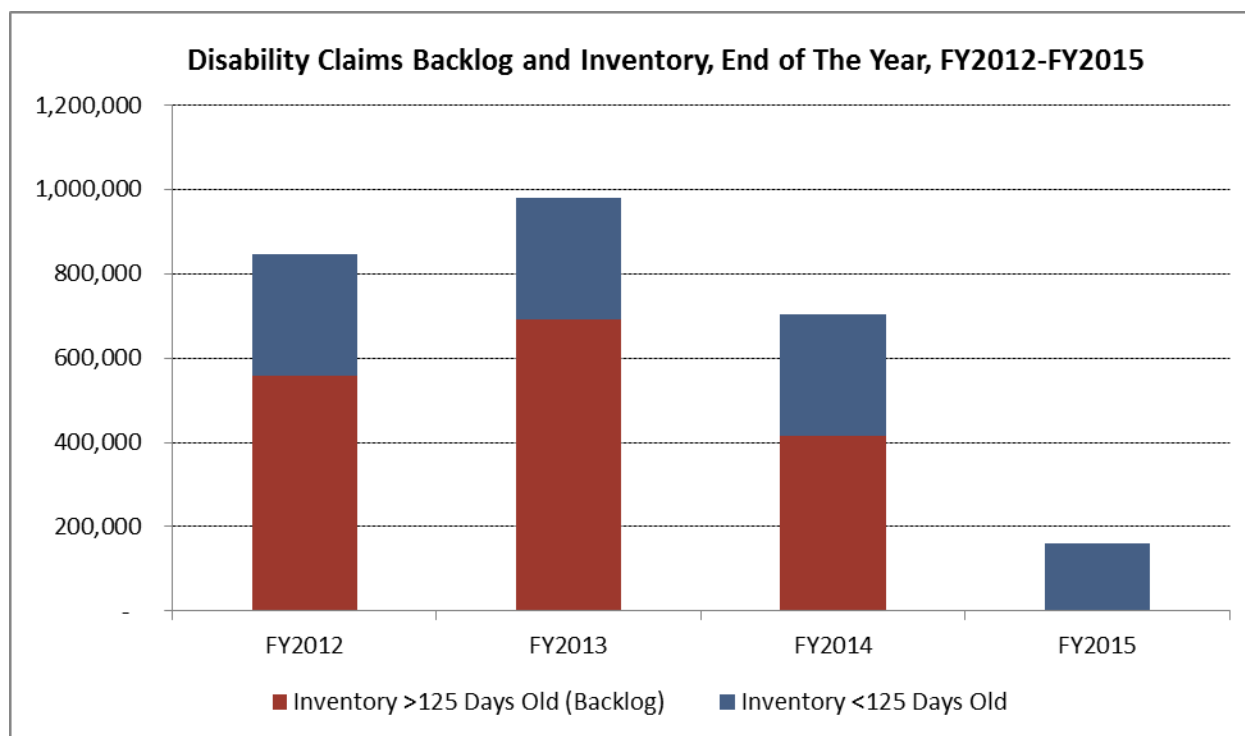
Exhibit 1 Eliminate the Backlog Over Four Years by Increased Production Capacity

The graph above displays the projected annual number of claims more than 125 days old in the inventory – what VBA defines as the backlog – at the end of each fiscal year. The continued growth in the inventory in 2013 reflects VBA's projection that receipts will continue to exceed decision output until 2014. The chart depicts how the backlog will be eliminated over the period Q1 2014 (the first time production exceeds intake, see Exhibit 5) and Q4 2015 (when the no claim in the inventory is older than 125 days). These are the key milestones and dates VBA will meet. The timeline for eliminating the backlog could be affected if policymakers establish new presumptive conditions, courts make new precedential decisions, or legislators make laws that establish new entitlements.

The forecasted major Transformation initiatives on the disability claims backlog are summarized in the "Take-Down" Chart below. Specific reductions associated with each initiative are cumulative. The red bar represents the increased production required to eliminate the backlog of all claims more than 125 days old in 2015. The anticipated lift from the initiatives will create the take-down to reach zero backlog.

Take Down Analysis

People (235K) — Segmented Lanes 82,000; Reduce Rework / QRT 143,000; Challenge Training 8,000; Skills Certification Training 2,000

Process (236K) — Six Sigma Design Team / SNL 49,000; Decision Spt Tools / Rules Based 16,000; FDC / DBQ 86,000; Searchable STR and Personnel Record PDFS 85,000

Technology (347K) — VRM / e-Benefits / VDC/VCIP 2,000; VBMS 345,000

Starting total: 818,000 (818K)

Right-side summary: People 235K; Process 236K; Technology 347K; Total 818K

Exhibit 2 Take Down Analysis

The corresponding timeline for each of the "people, process, technology" components of VBA Transformation Plan are provided in Exhibit 3. Currently we are on track with the below milestone dates.

Impact by Quarter
Yellow = Initial Operational Capability (IOC)
Green = Fully Operational Capability (FOC)

Focus	Initiative Name	Key Dates
People	Segmented Lanes	16 RO's in FY12 Remaining RO's in FY13
People	Reduce Rework/Quality Review Teams (QRT)	2QFY12
People	Challenge Training	4QFY11
People	Skills Certification Training	1QFY12
Process	Six Sigma Design Team / Simplified Notification Letter (SNL)	2QFY12
Process	VBMS Decision Spt Tools / Rules Based Processing	3QFY12 (IOC) 4QFY13 (FOC)
Process	Fully Developed Claims (FDC)	3% FY12 20% 4QFY13
Process	Disability Benefits Questionaire (DBQ)	3QFY12 (IOC) 1QFY13 (FOC)
Process	Searchable Service Treatment Records (STR) and Personnel Record PDFs	1QFY13 (IOC) 4QFY13 (FOC)
Technology	VRM/e-Benefits/VDC	4QFY12 (IOC) 4QFY13 (FOC)
Technology	VBMS	16 RO's in CY12 34 RO's in FY13 6 RO's 1QFY14

Exhibit 3 Effective Dates by Initiative

A more detailed description of the plan's initiatives is provided below.

1.0   People

VBA's employees are the key to Transformation success, and over 50% of them are Veterans themselves. In order to have the best-trained, most efficient and highly skilled workforce, VBA is changing how its workforce is organized and trained to decide disability compensation claims. The productivity of the workforce and the accuracy of decisions are being increased through new national training programs and standards. VBA's new standardized organizational model incorporates a case-management approach to claims processing. VBA is reorganizing its workforce into cross-functional teams that enable employee visibility of the entire processing cycle of a Veteran's claim. These cross-functional teams work together on one of three segmented lanes: express, special operations, or core. Claims that predictably can take less time will flow through an express lane (30%); those taking more time or requiring special handling will flow through a special operations lane (10%); and the rest of the claims flow through the core lane (60%).

VBA projects that segmented lanes can accelerate 350K "express" claims from 262 days to complete to 80 days, a reduction of 182 days, reducing average days to complete (for all claims) by 54 days. As of December 2012, 51 regional offices implemented this structure, and the remaining 5 offices are implementing the new model during the second quarter of FY 2013.

VBA instituted Challenge Training in 2011 and Quality Review Teams (QRTs) in 2012 to improve employee training and accuracy while decreasing rework time. Challenge Training is focused on overall skills and readiness of the workforce, and QRTs focus on improving performance on the most common sources of error in the claims processing cycle; data on VBA's largest sources of error are captured and analyzed by its National Accuracy Team. Today, for example, QRTs are focused on the process by which proper physical examinations are ordered; incorrect or insufficient exams previously accounted for 30% of VBA's error rate. As a result of this focus, VBA has seen a 23% improvement in this area.

The 1,900 new employees who have received Challenge Training decide 150% more claims per day than predecessor cohorts, with a 30% increase in accuracy, i.e. these new employees decide 30% more claims per day than previous groups of employees at a similar stage in their development. This is a marked improvement in performance, and is being scaled across the entire enterprise. As of 1 March 2012, VBA initiated a new Challenge course focused on improving the low performing regional offices.

VBA established Quality Review Teams (QRTs) in all 56 regional offices on 1 March 2012 to provide timely, responsive quality assurance and training to its workforce. These QRTs reduce the lag-time in measuring accuracy from 4 months to 1 week, permitting timely corrective actions to prevent repeat errors. VBA also focused its new QRTs on "in process reviews" (IPRs) for training on errors made repeatedly and in high volume.

VBA tracks the impact of these initiatives on accuracy through a 3-month rolling average accuracy metric that is reported in ASPIRE and can be seen by anyone inside or outside VA. FY 2012 data demonstrated a 3% increase in national accuracy standards from 83% to 86%. The accuracy outcome objectives for the next 3 years are: 90% in FY 2013, 93% in FY 2014, and 98% in FY 2015.

2.0   Process

Through process-improvement initiatives, VBA is rapidly developing and testing streamlined business processes, focusing on eliminating repetition and rework. VBA established a "Design Team" concept to support business-process transformation. Using design teams, VBA conducts rapid development and testing of process changes and automated processing tools in the workplace. This design team process demonstrates through pilot initiatives that changes are actionable and effective before they are implemented nationwide.

Since 2009, VBA has actively solicited innovative ideas for process improvement from Veterans, employees, and industry stakeholders through a variety of structured mechanisms. Literally thousands of ideas were received and culled down to those with the largest potential to attack the backlog. For example, automated Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQs) (discussed below) – arguably one of the most highly leveraged changes – came from one of the VBA employee idea competitions. Additionally, VBA has also conducted Lean Six Sigma and Kaizen events on these selected targets of opportunity, all focused on 5 major areas of focus: wait time, rework, productivity, digital intake, and variance.

VBA also implemented the Simplified Notification Letter initiative. This initiative has reduced key strokes and automated production language in preparation of the Veteran's decision letter, thus improving rating decision productivity and accuracy. VBA implemented this initiative on 1 March 2012; it has decreased claims "waiting" for a rating decision by 35%. This translated into nearly 32K more rating decisions in the month of July (115,912) than in the month of March (84,115). At this rate and adjusting for the percentage of the claims processing cycle that the rating component represents (approximately one-third), VBA will complete 120K additional claims per year. Again, this is a national level initiative that is deployed in all 56 regional offices.

VBA has built new decision-support tools to improve efficiency and consistency (accuracy) and reduce rework. The stand-alone evaluation builders and rules-based calculators (for 52 body systems) have been deployed in a "rudimentary" capacity to all 56 regional offices. The evaluation builder functionality has been integrated for all body systems and is included in the electronic claims processing system known as the Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS). In the test phase with new employees, these calculators improved the accuracy and consistency of non-complex claims decisions by 9%, from 89% to 98%. Future VBMS releases will contain integration with DBQs.

Fully Developed Claims (FDCs) are critical to achieving VBA's goals. A fully developed claim is one that includes all DoD service medical and personnel records, including entrance and exit exams, applicable DBQs, any private medical records, and a fully completed claim form. An FDC is critical to reducing "wait time" and "rework". Today, VBA receives only 3% of claims in fully developed form[1]. When a qualified FDC is received, VBA is not required to continue the long and exhaustive search for "potential evidence" as mandated by the Veterans Claims Assistance Act. This mandate, known as the "Duty to Assist" Act, is the greatest portion of the current 262-day process. Today, VBA completes these FDCs in 117 days.

VBA's target for FY 2013 is to increase these FDCs to 20% – meaning VBA will have the ability, if this goal is reached, to decide 153K additional claims in 117 days. VBA is exploring "monetary and/or nonmonetary" incentives for its VSO partners to increase FDC submission because of the game-changing impact this can have on claims-decision timeliness, including creation of a National Honor Roll to recognize exceptional and outstanding achievement that is of significant benefit to the nation with regard to eliminating the disability claims backlog and supporting Transformation. A 20% FDC submission level will increase annual production by 70K claims and reduce overall average days to complete by 18 days.

An agreement by DoD to provide 100% complete service treatment and personnel records for the 300K departing Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve Servicemembers – in an electronic, searchable format – will further increase the number of FDCs. When implemented, this action will cut as much as 60-90 days from the "awaiting evidence" portion of claims processing, and reduce the currently needed time to make a claim "ready for decision" from 133 days to 73 days for departing Servicemembers.

Electronic DBQs are forms that physicians complete during an exam that contain explicit medical information needed to decide a disability compensation claim. The single largest category for rework

---

[1] 25K of June's 766,234 pending claims

that results in delays in rating decisions is exams that contain insufficient data. Fully and properly completed DBQs would eliminate these errors.

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) medical exam support for the increase in claims is estimated at 500K exams per year beginning in FY 2013. This projection is associated with the additional disability claims production from FY 2013 through FY 2015. Since 61% of the claims in backlog are supplemental claims, the likelihood is high that a Veteran's disability will be rated at a 50% or higher level, placing these Veterans in a higher priority group for care.

The DBQs, now deployed to all 56 regional offices, can increase production by 60K claims while reducing overall average days to complete by 16 days. Seventy-one DBQs are now available to private physicians as well. VBA continues to seek DoD use of DBQs in exit exams.

3.0   Technology

Key to VBA's transformation is ending the reliance on the outmoded paper-intensive processes that thwart timely and accurate claims processing. VBA is deploying technology solutions that improve access, drive automation, reduce variance, and enable faster and more efficient operations. VBA's planned digital, paperless environment will also enable greater exchange of information and increased transparency to Veterans, the workforce, and stakeholders.

VBMS is a web-based, electronic claims processing solution complemented by improved business processes. It will assist in eliminating the existing claims backlog and serve as the technology platform for quicker, more accurate claims processing.

Moreover, VBMS will reduce delays resulting from errors in medical exam processing by incorporating Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) selection into the electronic claims development. The accuracy and timeliness of rating decisions will also be improved via the VBMS evaluation builder and rules-based decision-support tools.

National deployment of VBMS began in 2012, with a total of 18 ROs operational as of the end of the calendar year. Deployment to the remaining stations will be completed by the end of calendar year 2013.   We estimate that once VBMS is fully developed, integrated, and implemented, it will help improve VBA's production performance by at least 20% (in each of fiscal years 2014 and 2015) and accuracy by at least 8%.

VBA recently established the Veterans Claims Intake Program (VCIP). This program is tasked with streamlining processes for receiving records and data into VBMS and other VBA systems. Scanning operations and the transfer of Veteran data into VBMS are primary intake capabilities that are managed by VCIP. As VBMS is deployed to additional regional offices, document scanning will become increasingly important as the main mechanism for transitioning from paper-based claim folders to the new electronic environment. The VCIP contractors began scanning on September 10, 2012. The ramp-up volume mirrored the VBMS deployment plan for the 18 regional offices on VBMS as of the end of CY 2012. By the end of December 2012, the VBA contractors were providing 5M images per month. By the end of CY 2013, the contractors will be providing 70M images per month.

With electronic submission, we anticipate shaving 18 days from the ADC, in addition to eliminating mailing, shipping, copying and storage costs for these claims records.

A crucially important element of our technology plan is the ability to file an on-line claim through a new DoD-VA shared self-service portal called eBenefits, which is part of the Veterans Relationship Management (VRM) initiative. VRM will provide multiple self-service options for Veterans and their service providers. In addition to eBenefits, VRM includes the Stakeholder Enterprise Portal (SEP), the Direct Electronic Gateway (D2D), and VLER-dependent intake solutions like Access or Direct Connect

that provide service treatment records (STRs) from DoD and medical records from VHA, and – with the new DBQs – private physicians.

VBA estimates that 10% of claims will be submitted in this format in 2013, 25% in 2014, and grow to 75% by 2015. For example, because VSOs represent an estimated 60% of compensation claimants, usage of SEP/D2D (a special service for VSOs and States with their own electronic submission system) is estimated to peak at approximately 60,000 claims per month in 2015, or 3,000 per day through that channel alone.

4.0   Implementation Strategy

VBA has implemented many initiatives nationally and is currently in the phased deployment of its new organizational model and VBMS. VBA is closely tracking current metrics and is already seeing success. VBA is expanding what is measured to more clearly show the impact of the Transformation initiatives, both at local and national levels. VBA also continues its quest for additional new and innovative ideas to further transform our claims processes.

VBA's Implementation Center, established at VBA headquarters as a program management office, is streamlining the process of transformation by ensuring new ideas are approved through a governance process, and that implementation and training are carefully planned and executed utilizing a comprehensive change-management approach. This allows VBA to focus on implementing initiatives that will achieve the greatest gains, without degrading current performance.

The VBA Transformation Plan is designed to build upon success and prepare each regional office with key capabilities to meet the needs of the future. First, VBA implemented national initiatives at all 56 regional offices, including Challenge Training, Quality Review Teams, Skills Certification Testing, Simplified Notification Letter, and Fully Developed Claims. By building support and trust with its labor partners through these national initiatives, VBA built the foundation for the larger organizational change management effort. An emphasis was placed on training and communication during this first stage to prepare the workforce for the new reality.

VBA accelerated the implementation of the new organizational model of segmented lanes with cross-functional teams. Given the magnitude of this change, each office transitions to the new organizational model individually. Significant support and training from VBA central office are critical in this stage. As of December 2012, the new organizational model is fully operational at 51 regional offices. The remaining five regional offices are implementing the model during quarter 2 of FY 2013.

After employees are comfortable with the new organizational model, technology tools are added in the third and final phase. VBMS is the cornerstone of VBA's technology transformation efforts and provides the new electronic environment for claims processing at VBA. VBMS was operational at 18 ROs as of the end of 2012 and will be deployed to the remaining 38 ROs by the end of CY 2013.

By using this phased approach, VBA is able to build upon previous training efforts, continually realize productivity gains, and ensure successful integration of the people, process, and technology initiatives.

Section 3: Potential Future Factors

Implementation of VBA's transformation is currently on track based on our current workload projections. However, VBA continues to evaluate other external factors that could potentially have an impact. As VBA assesses and works through these potential factors, VBA will make strategic adjustments to the plan, continuing to engage with Congress and other stakeholders throughout the process.

The current plan does not include two important factors. These factors could add an estimated 774K claims over the 3-year period FY 2013 through FY 2015. While critical policy decisions have yet to be made, the consequence of these complicating factors may require additional productivity improvements and/or resources to achieve the 125/98 goal in 2015.

1.0   Veterans Opportunity to Work Act/Veterans Employment Initiative (VOW/VEI)

The VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 mandated participation in the Transition Assistance Program for all separating Servicemembers as well as Guard and Reserve members activated for more than 180 days. The Transition Assistance Program provides information and assistance to separating Servicemembers to ensure a successful transition from military to civilian life. VA successfully implemented Mandatory TAP on November 21, 2012. It is projected that 307K military personnel will transition to civilian status annually over the next four years, and VA will provide comprehensive benefit briefings at 250 sites around the world. Mandatory TAP includes an employment class delivered by the Department of Labor and a benefits brief delivered by VA.

Subsequently the President announced the inauguration of the Veterans Employment Initiative (VEI). VEI enhanced the existing Transition Assistance Program, adding optional modules of instruction for technical training, education, and small business startup. It also directed one-on-one counseling and a warm hand-off for Servicemembers transitioning to civilian life. VEI is to be fully implemented no later than 30 September 2013.

Servicemembers will transition into civilian life through the VOW/VEI program each year and file claims for compensation at increased rates, resulting in additional new claims over the next three years.

2.0   Camp Lejeune

Veterans who served at U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were potentially exposed to contaminants present in the base water supply prior to 1987. To ensure fairness and consistency in claims processing, adjudication of Camp Lejeune claims has been centralized at the Louisville, Kentucky, Regional Office, with tracking measures initiated. The population assigned to Camp Lejeune during the time period 1957-1987 is estimated by the Department of the Navy to be 630K. A newly enacted law provides health care to Veterans and their families who resided at Camp Lejeune during this period and have one of 15 specified medical conditions. While this law does not change the eligibility requirements for granting entitlement to compensation, it can be expected to drive an increased volume of claims related to Camp Lejeune, potentially as many as 165K new claims. As stated above, any significant growth in these claims would require additional resources to achieve VBA's 2015 goals. VA continues to decide Camp Lejeune claims on a case-by-case basis based on the factual and medical evidence in each claim (including length of time at Camp Lejeune, place of residence and work (on or off base), and medical and scientific evidence or opinions pertaining to the link between any current medical conditions and past presence at Camp Lejeune).

Section 4: Performance Management

VBA is tracking execution of its Transformation Plan against its key measures of performance that are tracked daily, weekly, monthly, and on a fiscal year basis. VBA's Implementation Center, established at VBA headquarters as the Transformation program management office, utilizes a comprehensive change management approach to oversee initiative deployment and execution. The focus is on implementing initiatives that achieve the greatest gains, without degrading current performance.

The dashboard below tracks key organizational performance measures.

Exhibit 4 Executive Level Dashboard

		Oct-11	Nov-11	Dec-11	Jan-12	Feb-12	Mar-12	Apr-12	May-12	Jun-12	Jul-12	Aug-12	Sep-12	Oct-12
Rating Bundle Inventory and Completes	# Claims Pending	823,156	837,619	844,166	849,439	857,719	861,755	857,291	863,851	873,439	865,732	856,092	846,590	855,552
	Target	821,142	822,929	824,717	826,504	828,292	830,079	831,867	833,654	835,442	837,229	839,017	840,000	852,424
	# Claims Backlogged	505,335	525,875	540,646	559,972	569,506	567,166	562,726	566,381	572,243	577,877	568,043	557,191	569,717
	Target	498,994	503,449	507,905	512,360	516,816	521,271	525,727	530,183	534,638	539,094	543,549	546,000	558,766
	% Claims Backlogged	61.4%	62.7%	64.0%	65.9%	66.3%	65.8%	65.6%	65.6%	65.5%	66.8%	66.4%	65.8%	66.6%
	Target	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	60.0%	66.0%
	# Received	90,327	88,893	86,321	85,201	89,170	99,736	85,875	89,680	89,744	88,887	97,822	88,686	89,618
	Target													
	# Claims Completed	77,626	74,430	79,774	79,928	80,890	95,700	90,339	83,120	80,156	96,594	107,462	98,188	80,656
	Target	94,000	94,000	98,700	94,000	94,000	103,400	98,700	103,400	98,700	98,700	108,100	89,300	111,233
	# Issues Completed*	346,882	332,094	346,747	371,225	404,816	495,783	486,693	476,163	450,888	455,471	546,620	479,092	425,749
	Target													
Rating Bundle Timeliness and Accuracy	ADC MTD	223.1	224.3	232.9	244.9	254	259.5	275.5	278.3	284.7	278.9	284.1	282.6	277.1
	Target													
	ADC FYTD	223.1	223.7	226.9	231.5	236.1	240.7	246.2	250.2	253.9	256.8	259.8	262.0	277.1
	Target	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	230.0	250.0
	3 Month Rolling Accuracy*	84.5%	85.2%	86.1%	87.3%	87.0%	87.0%	86.9%	86.9%	86.0%	85.5%	85.5%	85.7%	85.1%
	Target	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	87.0%	90.0%
BDD and QS	# BDD Received	3,115	2,559	2,103	2,560	2,191	1,931	1,960	2,059	2,696	2,923	4,753	3,452	3,311
	# BDD Claims Completed	1,847	1,528	1,441	1,799	1,588	2,007	2,291	2,188	2,280	2,258	2,834	2,883	2,562
	# QS Received	2,748	2,633	2,411	2,180	2,119	1,965	2,125	2,015	2,568	2,167	5,945	2,194	2,630
	# QS Claims Completed	1,795	1,490	1,624	2,016	1,929	2,515	2,699	2,817	3,349	4,325	5,448	4,926	3,262
FTE Level Data	Claims Produced per Direct FTE MTD*	5.5	5.3	5.7	5.7	5.7	6.8	6.4	5.9	5.7	6.9	7.6	7.0	5.6
	Claims Received per Direct FTE MTD*	6.4	6.3	6.1	6.0	6.3	7.1	6.1	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.9	6.3	6.2

*Data is only available for this metric on a month-end basis.

Note: Receipts are calculated as follows: Pending end of current week - Pending Beginning of month + Completed Month-to-Date

TERMS OF EXHIBIT 4

# of Claims Pending – All disability claims received by VBA that are currently in process, whether pending for just a few hours or part of VBA's backlog (over 125 days). The inventory is dynamic rather than static.

# of Claims Backlogged – All disability claims in the inventory that have been pending more than 125 days. Goal is no claims over 125 days in 2015.

% of Backlogged Claims – Percent of disability claims in the inventory that have been pending more than 125 days, tracking toward VBA's 2015 goal of no claims pending over 125 days

# of Claims Receipts – Volume of incoming disability claims added to the inventory, both original (first-time) claims and supplemental claims (claims for increased benefits and new conditions).

# of Claims Completed – Number of disability claims for which a rating decision has been finalized and all other administrative actions (decision notification, award, etc.) completed. VBA's Transformation Plan includes initiatives directed toward increasing decision output (claims completed) above the volume of incoming claims (claims receipts) in order to eliminate the backlog.

# of Issues Completed – Number of specific disabilities rated within the disability claims that have been completed (referred to as "issues"). Veterans today are claiming many more disabilities (between 11 and 14 for GWOT Veterans), resulting in increasing numbers of issues rated, adding to complexity of the process and the time to complete the claim.

Average Days to Complete (ADC) (Monthly) – The average elapsed time from the date the claim is received by VBA to the date all actions have been completed on the claim. This is the key timeliness outcome measure for Veterans, but will reflect policy decisions to complete "old" claims first.

Average Days to Complete (ADC) (FYTD) – Cumulative decision timeliness measure that tracks performance against VBA's annual and strategic goals.

3-Month Rolling Accuracy – Assessment of disability claims decision accuracy conducted under VBA's national quality assurance program. A statistically valid number of cases is reviewed and tracked for each regional office and nationally on a rolling 12-month basis. VBA now also tracks this 3-month rolling average as a more immediate indicator of the impact of transformational initiatives.

Claims Processed per Direct FTE – Measure of organizational performance that assesses the number of completed claims against all FTE directly involved in and contributing to claims processing.

Claims Received per Direct FTE – Measure of organizational performance that assesses the number of incoming claims against all FTE directly involved in and contributing to claims processing. Goal is for Claims Completed per Direct FTE to exceed Claims Completed per Direct FTE, thus driving down the backlog.

The following graphs show the estimated change in claims received, claims produced under the Transformation initiatives, the timing of the initiatives, and the resultant elimination of the backlog prior to the end of FY 2015:
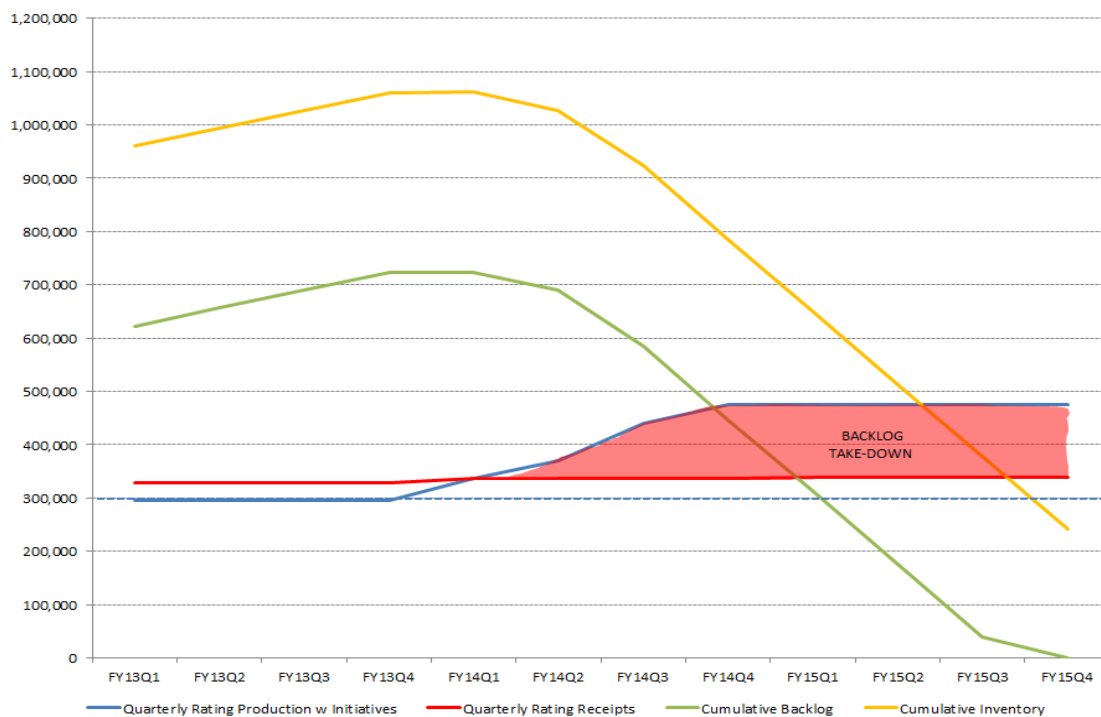
Exhibit 5 Take Down Chart
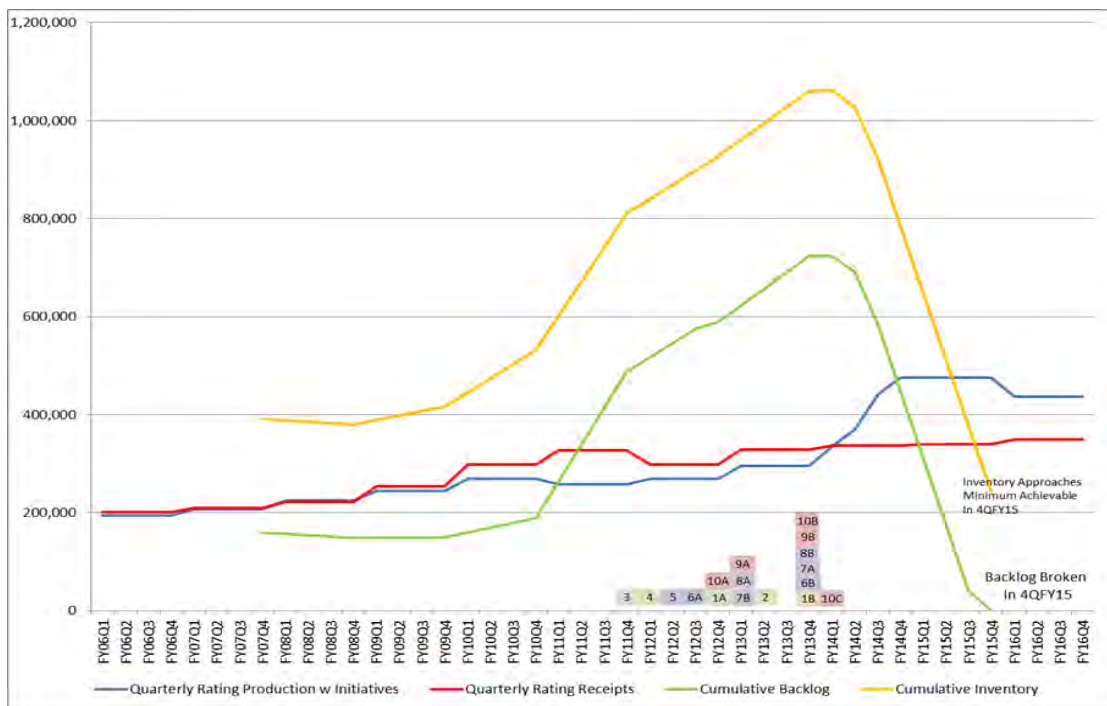
Exhibit 6 Initiatives Timeline Chart and Supporting Initiative Table

Appendix: Veterans Benefits Management System (VBMS)

VBMS is an IT system designed to help claims adjudicators reach timely and informed decisions in a digital environment. VBMS will enable the five steps of the standard claims adjudication process including establishment, development, evidence, rating, and awards.

Background

In 2010, an initial version of VBMS was deployed at VA ROs in Providence, RI and Salt Lake City, UT as part of a pilot to develop and test the software and identify functionality enhancements for future iterations. Those sites received infrastructure and application enhancements during the course of the development cycle to ensure scalability for national deployment. The application enhancements resulted in deployment of key functionality for claims establishment, rating, and general correspondence.

Implementation Status

The VBMS Project Management Office (PMO) has made significant progress toward the goal of national deployment, which began in the summer 2012 and will continue through CY 2013. VBMS has been deployed to additional ROs in a phased implementation approach designed to minimize operational and performance disruptions that typically accompany major transformation efforts.

As of December 2012, VBMS was deployed at 18 ROs. National deployment of VBMS to all 56 ROs is scheduled for completion by the end of CY 2013.

The following schedule outlines the recently completed deployment schedule:

- Completed Deployments:

    o   March 2012: FT Harrison, MT and Wichita, KS

    o   September 2012: Hartford, CT

    o   November 2012: Huntington, WV; Des Moines, IA; Newark, NJ; New Orleans, LA; and Milwaukee, WI

    o   November 26, 2012: Phoenix, AZ; Cleveland, OH; Salt Lake City, UT (full site); Houston, TX; and Boise, ID

    o   December 10, 2012: Montgomery, AL; Portland, OR; Atlanta, GA; San Diego, CA; and Winston-Salem, NC

VBMS implementation, along with institutionalization of complementary people, process, and other technology initiatives, will increase the overall efficiency and timeliness of claims processing.

Functionality

As of January 22, 2013, 48,751 rating workload claims have been established in VBMS since the beginning of the program, including 43,337 claims established in FY 2013 following deployment to 18 regional offices.

During the pilot phases, VBMS improved electronic claims adjudication to an average of 115 days (versus an average of 262 days for a paper-based claim decision). Additionally the VBMS Rating application's Evaluation Builder and rules-based calculators have reduced re-work and improved the

efficiency and consistency of rating decisions. In the test phase with new employees, these calculators improved the accuracy and consistency of non-complex claims decisions by 9%, from 89% to 98%.

The last two major releases of VBMS have added system functionally aimed at increasing the efficiency and timeliness of the VBA claims process. The VBMS PMO also implemented a number of software patches to improve the overall performance and user experience of VBMS based on user feedback from the pilot sites.

The following sections describe the system functionality that has been added over a series of incremental releases.

Major Release 3.0

- New functionality (including the VBMS Checklist, Development Log, Body System Suggestions, Assembly of Veterans Claims Assistance Act (VCAA) Letters for original claims and claims for increase, and Disability Benefits Questionnaire (DBQ) recommendations) to increase efficiency of development activities and reduce potential for errors and downstream rework.

- Rules-based decision recommendation tools and Evaluation Builder functionality in the VBMS Rating application to increase the efficiency and consistency of rating decisions and allow more time for raters to focus on complex issues and claims.

- Capabilities for a VSR to hold multiple roles and temporarily assign one or multiple claims among ROs to improve transparency and enable better collaboration via electronic brokering.

- Ability for authorized Veterans Service Organization representatives (VSOs) to view the status of claims and access rating decisions immediately.

- Readily accessible information on one screen with an embedded online help tool.

- New reference architecture for all existing and new VBMS testing and development environments for consistent and predictable implementation of new releases.

Release 3.0 Software Patches

- VBMS patch to improve work-queue indexing, performance, and user-experience and reduce the time it takes users to process contentions in VBMS.

- Prioritized defect repairs and additional performance optimization improvements for claim establishment, eFolder, search, work queue, contention processing, and faster document-loading capabilities.

Major Release 3.5

- Enhancements to the design and usability of the VBMS eFolder to enable VSRs to more easily view and manage documents.

- Federal third-party letter generation to increase efficiency of development activities and reduce potential for errors and downstream rework.

- Automated decision recommendations and additional Evaluation Builder functionality to facilitate more consistent, accurate, and timely rating decisions.

- Ability for commercial scanning vendors to upload documents to VBMS via electronic interface.

- Ability for VSOs to filter all of their pending claims in a separate queue to improve the transparency and timeliness of decisions.

Major Release 4.0

- Integration with VONAPP Direct Connect (VDC) to enable VBMS to accept electronically filed claims. This increases efficiency and reduces costs associated with scanning and validating documents.

- Enhancements to the eFolder user interface. These enhancements resulted in a more user-friendly experience and efficient navigation through the eFolder.

VBMS Release 4.1 will be deployed on January 28 and includes the ability to generate multiple letters for a single Veteran and enhanced eBenefits integration. This release will further increase claims processing accuracy and timeliness via new functionality.

Claims Intake

Currently, 97% of all claims received by VBA are in paper form, as are all of the various forms of information necessary to develop the claim, including medical information as well as service information from DoD. Moreover, 60% of all claims received are requests for additional compensation from a Veteran who already has an adjudicated claim. That claim must be converted from its current paper form into scanned images and data before the additional request can be developed and adjudicated.

VBMS is designed to process claims in a completely electronic environment. All claim information must be either received in electronic form (data and/or images) or must be converted to electronic form.

Consequently, and out of necessity, the Veterans Claim Intake Program (VCIP) has been established to develop strategies for receiving scanned images from a scanning vendor as the primary intake method for claims and claims information. It is VBA's goal and expectation that intake of new claims information can quickly be converted to direct receipt of electronic data; for example, from claims information entered directly by a Veteran on a web-based form. However, the sheer volume of existing paper-based claims and the fact that 60% of all claims are "supplemental" to an existing adjudication ensure that the VBMS system will need to accommodate a large volume of scanned images in the foreseeable future (approximately 60M images per month).

Transformation Implementation Timelines

The charts below show the implementation timelines for the transformation organizational model and VBMS:
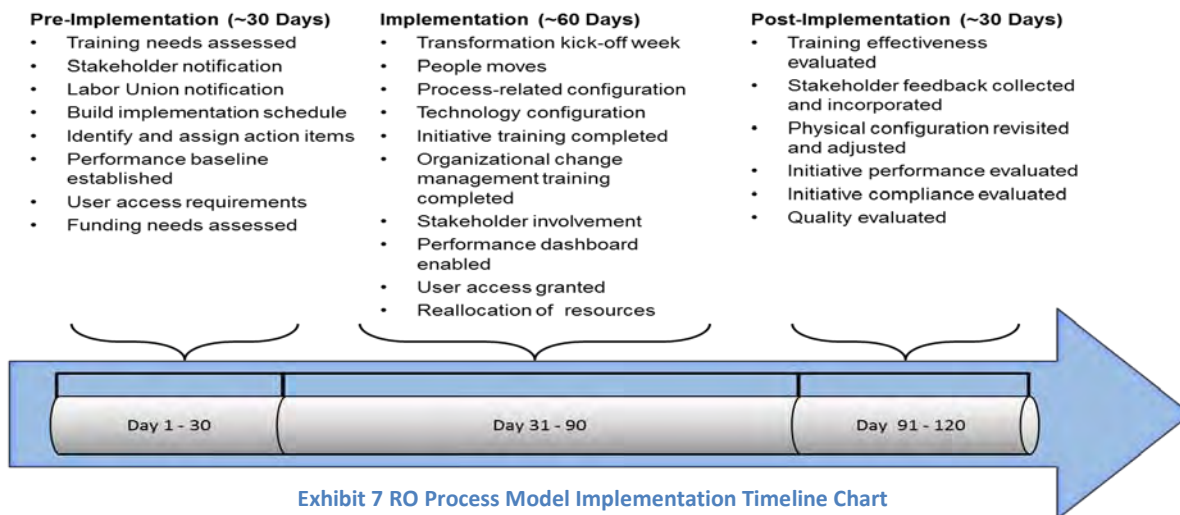
Exhibit 7 RO Process Model Implementation Timeline Chart

	Station Name	Organizational Model Kick Off	VBMS Go-live		Station Name	Organizational Model Kick Off	VBMS Go-live
1	Wichita	FY12 Q2	CY12 Q1	31	Roanoke	FY13 Q1	
2	Ft. Harrison	FY12 Q2	CY12 Q1	32	Reno	FY13 Q1	
3	Huntington	FY12 Q3	CY12 Q4	33	Albuquerque	FY13 Q1	
4	Hartford	FY12 Q3	CY12 Q3	34	Muskogee	FY13 Q1	
5	Des Moines	FY12 Q3	CY12 Q4	35	Boston	FY13 Q1	
6	New Orleans	FY12 Q3	CY12 Q4	36	Manchester	FY13 Q1	
7	Newark	FY12 Q4	CY12 Q4	37	Detroit	FY13 Q1	
8	Milwaukee	FY12 Q2	CY12 Q4	38	San Diego	FY13 Q1	
9	Phoenix	FY12 Q3	CY12 Q4	39	Chicago	FY13 Q1	
10	Cleveland	FY12 Q4	CY12 Q4	40	Baltimore	FY13 Q1	
11	Salt Lake City	FY12 Q4	CY12 Q4	41	Buffalo	FY13 Q1	Planned But Not Released
12	Houston	FY12 Q3	CY12 Q4	42	Nashville	FY13 Q1	
13	Boise	FY12 Q3	CY12 Q4	43	Winston-Salem	FY13 Q1	
14	Montgomery	FY12 Q4	CY12 Q4	44	St. Petersburg	FY13 Q1	
15	Portland	FY12 Q3	CY12 Q4	45	St. Louis	FY13 Q1	
16	Atlanta	FY12 Q4	CY12 Q4	46	Anchorage	FY13 Q1	
17	San Juan	FY12 Q3	CY13 Q3	47	Little Rock	FY13 Q1	
18	Indianapolis	FY12 Q2	CY13 Q3	48	New York	FY13 Q1	
19	Louisville	FY13 Q1	CY12 Q4	49	Fargo	FY13 Q1	
20	Pittsburgh	FY13 Q1	CY12 Q4	50	Wilmington	FY13 Q1	
21	Oakland	FY13 Q1		51	White River Junction	FY13 Q1	
22	Sioux Falls	FY13 Q1		52	Honolulu	FY13 Q2	
23	Jackson	FY13 Q1		53	Waco	FY13 Q2	
24	Denver/Cheyenne	FY13 Q1	Planned But Not Released	54	Seattle	FY13 Q2	
25	Togus	FY13 Q1		55	Los Angeles	FY13 Q2	
26	Columbia	FY13 Q1		56	Manila	FY13 Q2	
27	Lincoln	FY13 Q1					
28	Providence	FY13 Q1					
29	Philadelphia	FY13 Q1					
30	St. Paul	FY13 Q1					

FY12	18 Organizational Model		CY12	18 VBMS
FY13 Q1	33 Organizational Model		CY13	38 VBMS
FY13 Q2	5 Organizational Model			

Exhibit 8 Organizational Model and VBMS Regional Office Rollout Chart

The chart below shows the quarterly implementation plan for an individual RO, in this case, the Phoenix RO.

ID	Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Qtr 3, 2012
					Apr / Jun / Aug
1	Regional Office	96 days	04/27	09/07	74%
2	Planning Implementation	38 days	04/27	06/19	100%
3	> 6 Weeks Prior to Initiaive Kick Off 3 weeks prior to Req. Gathering Visit	38 days	04/27	06/19	100%
21	6 Weeks Prior to Initiaive Kick Off 2 weeks prior to Req. Gathering Visit	5 days	05/04	05/10	100%
24	5 Weeks Prior to Initiaive Kick Off 1 week prior to Req. Gathering Visit	5 days	05/11	05/17	100%
38	Plan Implementation Completed	0 days	05/17	05/17	05/17 ◆ 100%
39	Pre-Implementation	21 days	05/18	06/15	100%
40	4 Weeks Prior to Initiaive Kick Off Week of Req. Gathering Visit	5 days	05/18	05/24	100%
62	3 Weeks Prior to Initiaive Kick Off 1 Week after Req. Gathering Visit	5 days	05/28	06/01	100%
75	2 Weeks Prior to Initiaive Kick Off 2 Weeks after Req. Gathering Visit	5 days	06/04	06/08	100%
84	1 Week Prior to Initiaive Kick Off 3 Weeks after Req. Gathering Visit	5 days	06/11	06/15	100%
97	Pre-Implementation Complete	0 days	06/15	06/15	06/15 ◆ 100%
98	Implementation	63 days	06/11	09/05	71%
99	Week of Process Model Kick Off	5 days	06/11	06/15	100%
131	Initiative Implementation Week	2 days	06/18	06/19	100%
138	Implementation Completed	0 days	06/19	06/19	06/19 ◆ 100%
139	1 week after Initiative Go-Live	1 day	06/20	06/20	100%
142	Assess Readiness for Post-Implementation	3 days	06/21	06/25	06/21 ▬ 100%
143	VBMS Implementation	15 days	08/13	08/31	0%
146	Assess Readiness for Post-Implementation	3 days	09/03	09/05	09/03 ◉ 0%
147	Post Implementation	52 days	06/28	09/07	0%
148	Evaluate Implementation	42 days	06/28	08/24	0%
161	Certify Implementation	2 days	08/27	08/28	0%
165	Validate Implementation	8 days	08/29	09/07	0%
170	Post Implementation Complete	0 days	09/07	09/07	09/07 ◆ 0%

Exhibit 9 Implementation Plan by Quarter

The exhibit below shows recent completion dates for the VBMS milestones.

VBMS Milestones

Milestone Title	Milestone Completion Criteria	Completion Date
Major Release 3.0	3.0 expanded upon version 2.4 system functionality and provide the product baseline to support National Deployment	September 2012
3.1	Release 3.1 patch improved work queue indexing, system performance, and end-user experience in processing contentions	September 2012
Deployment	VBMS Deployment to Hartford RO	September 2012
3.5	Release 3.5 included eFolder enhancements, federal third-party letters, and seven embedded calculators.	November 2012
3.5 Patch	Patch Release to 3.5 included the VSO work queue.	November 2012
Deployment	VBMS deployment at Huntington, Des Moines, New Orleans, Newark, and Milwaukee ROs	November 2012
Deployment	VBMS deployment at Phoenix, Cleveland, Salt Lake City, Houston, and Boise ROs	November 2012
Major Release 4.0	4.0 will be able to intake all claims and associated documents are submitted electronically via VONAPP Direct Connect (VDC).	December 2012
Deployment	VBMS deployment at Montgomery, Portland, Atlanta, San Diego, and Winston Salem Regional Offices.	December 2012

Exhibit 10 VBMS Milestones

ATTACHMENT 7

HOMELAND SECURITY PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE 12 (HSPD-12) PROGRAM

1.   REASON FOR ISSUE: This Directive defines Department-wide policy, roles, and responsibilities for the creation, operation, and maintenance of an HSPD-12 Program necessary to ensure Department compliance of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12), "*Policy for a Common Identification Standard for Federal Employees and Contractors.*"

2.   SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES: This Directive defines Department-wide policies, roles, and responsibilities for aligning Personal Identity Verification (PIV), Logical Access Control System (LACS), and Physical Access Control System (PACS) with the Identity, Credential, and Access Management capabilities within VA.

3.   RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: Office of Operations, Security, and Preparedness (007), Personnel Security and Identity Management, HSPD-12 Program Management Office.

4.   RELATED HANDBOOK: VA Handbook 0735, *Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) Program.*

5.   RESCISSIONS: VA Directive 0735, *Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-12) Program, issued February 17, 2011.*

CERTIFIED BY:

BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:

/s/

/s/

LaVerne H. Council
Assistant Secretary,
Office of Information and Technology,
and Chief Information Officer

Kevin T. Hanretta
Assistant Secretary for Operations,
Security, and Preparedness

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HOMELAND SECURITY PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE 12 (HSPD-12) PROGRAM

1.   **PURPOSE**

     a. This Directive establishes Department-wide requirements and responsibilities for VA's HSPD-12 program:

     b. To provide a trusted framework and common identity infrastructure used to access VA facilities and information systems;

     c. To reduce the identity, credential, and access management burden for individual Department employee, contractor, and affiliate organizations by fostering common interoperable approaches;

     d. To align identity, credential, and access management policies and approaches;

     e. To establish roles to enhance interoperability when collaborating with external identity management activities; and

     f.   To provide notification that these policies apply to all Department administrations, staff offices, employees, contractors, and affiliates requiring access to Department facilities and information systems.

2.   **POLICY**

     a. Department facilities and information systems must meet identity, credentialing, and access management requirements of HSPD-12 and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum 11-11 *Continued Implementation of HSPD-12 Policy for a Common Identification Standard for Federal Employees and Contractors*, dated February 3, 2011, which requires that agency implementations align with the Federal Chief Information Officers Council's Federal Identity Credential Access Management (FICAM) Roadmap and Implementation Guidance.

     b. The Department must procure services and products that comply with HSPD-12 requirements in current Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) and, where applicable, are on the General Services Administration (GSA) Approved Products List.

     c. The Department must issue and manage the lifecycle of the Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Credential, used in accordance with HSPD-12 and the current version of FIPS 201.

     d. The VA PIV Credential is the sole identity credential for Department employees, contractors, and affiliates.

     e. The Department will establish:

     (1)   Standards, processes, policies, and procedures for the creation, issuance, usage, maintenance, provisioning, and de-provisioning of identities and identity credentials for all Department employees, contractors, and affiliates accessing VA facilities and information systems.

3

(2)   Policies and procedures for requesting, sponsoring, identity proofing, registering, and adjudicating identities and issuing and re-issuing of identity credentials to Department employees, contractors, and affiliates.

(3)   Policies and procedures to ensure only trained and authorized personnel are permitted to issue identity credentials to sponsored individuals whose identities are verified and who possess an appropriate background investigation.

(4)   Policies and procedures for the use of identities and identity credentials for access to Department facilities and information systems.

(5)   Policies and procedures to ensure that the proper identity verification is made when an individual attempts to access Department facilities and information systems.

(6)   A Governance Board led by the PSIM (Personnel Security and Identity Management) Director, Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security, and Preparedness (AS/OSP), or designee, which is comprised of administration and staff office representatives to set priorities, to provide support, advice, and coordination among the various stakeholders on initiatives undertaken by the HSPD-12 Program Management Office (PMO) as set forth in the Governance Board Charter.

3.   RESPONSIBILITIES

a.   **Secretary of Veterans Affairs.** The Secretary, or the Deputy Secretary, is responsible for the VA HSPD-12 Program. The Secretary delegates this authority as set forth below and makes other delegations as appropriate.

b.   **Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials** will:

(1)   Ensure compliance with the policies, procedures, and guidance issued by OSP and established in this Directive and associated policies.

(2)   Ensure that all products purchased for HSPD-12 related products and services meet all applicable Federal standards and requirements, are listed on the GSA Approved Products List (APL), and are tested to ensure interoperability with the current environment.

(3)   Participate in the Governance Board established by OSP.

(4)   Ensure training for individuals to fulfill the roles for PIV Card Issuer (PCI) Manager, Sponsor, Registrar, Issuer, and PIV Card Applicant Representatives (PCAR).

(5)   Ensure applicants travel for enrollment and activation, renewal, reissuance, or PIN reset of the Department Credential.

(6)   Ensure compatibility and interoperability of the organization's PACS and LACS with VA requirements.

(7)   Ensure compliance with Department PACS and LACS policies and procedures.

(8)   Maintain all forms and records that will permit the audit of the organization's compliance in accordance with HSPD-12, the current version of FIPS 201, Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), and relevant OMB guidance.

(9)   Ensure personal information collected is handled in a manner consistent with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. § 552a) and FISMA requirements.

c.   **Assistant Secretary for Operations, Security, and Preparedness (AS/OSP)**, or designee, will:

(1)   Develop standards, processes, policies, and procedures for the creation, issuance, usage, maintenance, provisioning, and de-provisioning of identities and identity credentials for all Department employees, contractors, and affiliates accessing VA facilities and information systems.

(2)   Develop policies and procedures for requesting, sponsoring, identity proofing, registering, and adjudicating identities and issuing and re-issuing of identity credentials to Department employees, contractors, and affiliates.

(3)   Develop policies and procedures to ensure only trained and authorized personnel are permitted to issue identity credentials to sponsored individuals whose identities are verified and who possess an appropriate background investigation.

(4)   Develop policies and procedures for the use of identities and identity credentials for access to Department facilities and information systems.

(5)   Develop policies and procedures to ensure that the proper identity verification is made when an individual attempts to access Department facilities and information systems.

(6)   Lead or designate a representative to lead a Governance Board, comprised of administration and staff office representatives to set priorities, to provide support, advice, and coordination among the various stakeholders on initiatives undertaken by the HSPD-12 PMO as set forth in the Governance Board Charter.

(7)   Establish, maintain, and monitor Department-wide identity, credential, and access management policies, processes, procedures, training, oversight, compliance, and inspection requirements.

(8)   Establish, maintain, and issue directives and handbooks that direct the implementation for requesting, sponsoring, identity proofing, registering, adjudication of background investigations, issuing, provisioning, de-provisioning, and usage of identities and identity credentials as elements of identity, credential, and access management.

(9)   Develop policies, procedures, and procurement requirements for the Department-wide Physical Access Control System (PACS) program.

(10)   Manage the implementation of the Departmental PACS program.

(11)   Maintain the operations of VA Central Office (VACO) PACS.

(12)   Approve the policies, procedures, requirements, and implementation of the Departmental Logical Access Control System (LACS) program in cooperation with the Office of Information and Technology (OI&T).

(13)   Approve the policies, procedures, requirements, and implementation of the Departmental Identity and Access Management (IAM) program in cooperation with OI&T.

(14)   Develop and maintain Departmental implementation of identity, credential, and access management.

(15)   Establish policies and procedures for the training of all roles in the HSPD-12 process.

(16)   Develop policies and procedures for issuing VA PIV, non-PIV, and Flash Credentials.

(17)   Develop physical access policies for all employees, contractors, and affiliates requiring access to VA facilities.

(18)   Develop policies and procedures for VA facilities to provide enrollment operations and issuance of HSPD-12 Credentials as specified in the current versions of FIPS 201 and NIST Special Publication 800-79, *Guidelines for the Accreditation of Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Card Issuers (PCIs)*. Such procedures include the designation of qualified individuals to the roles of Designated Accreditation Authority (DAA), Assessor, VA Official for Privacy (AOP), and other VA officials involved with identity management.

(19)   Establish VA Personnel Security and Suitability directives and handbooks for all individuals requiring access to VA facilities and information systems.

(20)   Determine position designations for all individuals requiring access to VA facilities and information systems.

(21)   Ensure the initiation, adjudication, and reinvestigation of background investigations for all employees, contractors, and affiliates.

(22)   Maintain a record of all background investigations for all employees, contractors, and affiliates.

(23)   Collaborate with OI&T to publish a quarterly report on the number of PIV credentials issued to employees, contractors, and affiliates as required by OMB and other reports as necessary.

    d.   **Executive in Charge, Office of Information and Technology, and Chief Information Officer,** or designee, will:

(1)   Ensure compliance with the responsibilities set forth in section 3.b. of this Directive.

(2)   Establish and operate a help desk to support identity, credential, and access management program related systems and operations.

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(3)   Ensure interoperability and conformance to applicable Federal standards for the lifecycle of HSPD-12 related components.

(4)   Establish OI&T policies which clearly state IT processes, roles, and responsibilities in conformance with identity, credential, and access management program requirements as defined by OSP.

(5)   Assist OSP with developing and maintaining the infrastructure and connectivity for an enterprise PACS that complies with HSPD-12 technical and interoperability standards.

(6)   Assist OSP to establish and maintain an enterprise LACS infrastructure that complies with HSPD-12 technical and interoperability standards.

(7)   Ensure the protection of personal privacy in accordance with HSPD-12 and the requirements of the appropriate sections of the current version of FIPS 201-2.

(8)   OI&T shall conduct a yearly, or as-needed based on changes to the system, review and update of the PIV System's Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) and System of Records Notice (SORN).

(9)   Assist OSP to publish a quarterly report on the number of PIV Credentials issued to employees, contractors, and affiliates as required by OMB and other reports as necessary.

(10)   Approve the policies, procedures, requirements, and implementation of the Departmental LACS program in cooperation with the AS/OSP.

(11)   Approve the policies, procedures, requirements, and implementation of the IAM program in cooperation with the AS/OSP.

e.   **Executive Director, Office of Acquisition, Logistics, and Construction (OALC)**, or designee, will:

(1)   Ensure compliance with the responsibilities set forth in paragraph 3.b. of this Directive.

(2)   Maintain design and building specifications in accordance with requirements defined by OSP as they relate to HSPD-12 and physical security.

(3)   Ensure all VA contracts and exercised options adhere to Subpart 4.13 of the FAR and OMB Memorandum 11-11.

(4)   Review and distribute relevant policies, procedures, and information to agency procurement operations as additional system requirements and operational procedures are defined by OSP.

(5)   Ensure that VA Contracting Officers appoint a Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) as the PIV Sponsor for each contract. The PIV Sponsor must be a Federal government employee and a COR.

(6)   Initiate, in collaboration with PSS and the Security and Investigation Center (SIC), required background investigations for all contractor employees who do not have a successfully adjudicated investigation on record or are undergoing a credential reissuance.

    f.   **Facility Directors/Regional Office Directors** will:

(1)   Ensure compliance with the responsibilities set forth in para. 3.b. of this Directive.

(2)   Appoint, in writing, a minimum of one and a maximum of three PIV Credential Issuance Facility (PCIF) Managers to be responsible for the following: appointing, in writing, registrars and issuers to support the badging office; managing the PIV operations and credential life cycle at the facility in accordance with this directive and associated handbook; ensuring initiation and completion of appropriate employee, contractor, and affiliate background checks prior to issuing a credential; managing the lifecycle of the credential to include creation, recovery, and destruction; and PACS management.

(3)   Ensure the staffing of a badging office, as they see fit to accommodate customers, during the normal operating hours of the facility. In order to meet separation of duty requirements, the badging office will be comprised of a minimum of three staff to ensure continued operation.

(4)   Issue, upon deployment of the capability to do so, only PIV, non-PIV, or Flash Credentials, based on access requirements, to all new and existing employees, contractors, and affiliates. Existing employees, contractors, and affiliates shall be issued the aforementioned credentials for all cases of credential re-issuances to include lost, stolen, or defective credentials and credential renewals.

(5)   Report to AS/OSP or designee issuance status for all PIV, non-PIV, and Flash Credential new issuances, renewals, and reissuances including lost, damaged, or stolen credentials monthly.

(6)   Ensure sustained operation of the PACS at the facility.

    g.   **Identity Credential Holders** will:

(1)   Comply with all HSPD-12 policies and procedures as well as use and protect their assigned identity credentials in accordance with Department policies and procedures, displaying their credentials at all times, and returning the identity credentials upon termination of their relationship with VA.

(2)   Comply with LACS and PACS usage policies.

4.   REFERENCES

    a.   E-Government Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-347 (Dec. 17, 2002);Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014, Pub. L. 113-283 (Dec. 18, 2014), codified at 44 U.S.C. Sections 3551-3558

b.   Executive Order 10450, Security Requirements for Government Employment, as amended

c.   Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Subpart 4.13

d.   Federal Information Processing Standards Publication (FIPS) 199, Standards for the Security Categorization of Federal Information and Information Systems, issued February 2004

e.   Federal Information Processing Standards Publication (FIPS) 201-2, Personal Identity Verification (PIV) of Federal Employees and Contractors, dated February 25, 2005, and amended October 2013

f.   Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552

g.   Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12, Policy for a Common Identification Standard for Federal Employees and Contractors, dated August 27, 2004

h.   NIST Special Publication 800-79-1, Guidelines for the Certification and Accreditation of PIV Card Issuing Organizations, issued July 2005, amended June 2008

i.   OMB Circular A-130, including its appendices

j.   OMB Memorandum M-05-24, Implementation of Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 12 –Policy for a Common Identification Standard for Federal Employees and Contractors, dated August 5, 2005

k.   OMB Memorandum M-08-01, HSPD-12 Implementation Status, dated October 23, 2007

l.   OMB Memorandum M-11-11, Continued Implementation of HSPD-12, dated February 3, 2011

m.   Privacy Act of 1974, 5 U.S.C. 552a

n.   Public Law 105-220, § 408(b) (Sec. 508, Electronic and Information Technology), codified at 29 U.S.C. § 794d

o.   VA Directive and Handbook 5005, Staffing

p.   VA Directive and Handbook 5021, Employee/Management Relations

q.   VA Directive and Handbook 0710, Personnel Suitability and Security Program

r.   VA Directive and Handbook 0730, Security and Law Enforcement

s.   VA Handbook 0735, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12) Program

t.   5 C.F.R. Parts 731, 732, and 736, Suitability; National Security Positions; and Personnel Investigations, respectively

u.   5 U.S.C. 301, Departmental Regulations

v.   38 U.S.C. 7421, Personnel administration: in general

5.   DEFINITIONS.

a.   **Access Control:**   The process of granting or denying specific requests to obtain and use information and/or related information processing services (that is, logical access to VA information and information systems) and to enter specific physical facilities (that is, physical access to VA owned or leased buildings and spaces).

b.   **Affiliate:**   Individuals who require logical access to VA information systems and/or physical access to VA facilities to perform their jobs and who do not fall under the category of Federal employee or contractor.   Examples include but are not limited to: Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) representatives, Joint Commission Reviewers, childcare staff, credit union staff, Union Officials and union support staff.

c.   **Applicant:**   An individual applying for a VA PIV, non-PIV, or Flash Credential.   An applicant may be a current or prospective Federal employee, contractor, or other individual requiring access to VA facilities, services, and/or information systems on a recurring basis.

d.   **Background Investigation:**   A process to ensure that a person is reliable, trustworthy, of good character and conduct, and loyal to the United States. The procedure includes verification and accuracy of an individual's identification, credentials, and employment history.   May include screening consisting of fingerprint checks for criminal history records, validation of resume and/or education references, and checks of various databases for appropriate preliminary checks.

e.   **Biometric:** A measurable, physical characteristic or personal behavioral trait used to recognize the identity, or verify the claimed identity, of an Applicant. Facial images, fingerprints, and iris scan samples are all examples of biometrics.

f.   **Certification:** The formal process of assessing the attributes (e.g., knowledge, availability, accountability, trustworthy, security) of a process, role, or task using various methods of assessment (e.g., interviews, document reviews, test results, evaluations, validations reports) that support the assertion of reliability and capability to perform the process, role, or task.

g.   **Contractor:**   A non-Federal employee who is under contract for furnishing supplies and/or services to VA who will have access to VA information systems and/or physical access to VA facilities regardless of frequency or length of time.

h.   **Credential:**   Documentary evidence that attests to an individual's identity used to grant authorization to access VA facilities, services, and/or VA information systems.   In this directive a credential can be a PIV Card, Non-PIV Card, or Flash Credential.

i.   **Employee:**   Defined in title 5 U.S.C. 2105(a) as an individual who is appointed in the civil service and engaged in the performance of a Federal function under supervision by a Federal officer or employee.

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j.   **Federal information Processing Standards (FIPS):** A standard for Federal computer systems, for adoption and use by Federal agencies or a contractor or organization acting on behalf of a Federal agency, that has been developed and issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Department of Commerce under 40 USC 11331.

k.   **Flash Credential:** A VA identification (ID) card containing a photograph issued to an individual for infrequent access to VA public areas only (such as cafeterias, lobbies, libraries, credit unions) for a period not to exceed 12 months.

l.   **General Services Administration (GSA) Approved Products List (APL):** A list of products and services that are in compliance with the current version of the Federal Information Processing Standard 201 and its supporting publications. The list may be found at http://fips201ep.cio.gov/apl.php. Only those products and services (service providers) listed on the FIPS 201 APL are recognized as being in compliance with HSPD-12.

m.   **Identification:** The process of discovering the true identity of a person defined by known or recognized characteristics such as birth place, age, and residence of a person.

n.   **Identity:** The set of physical and behavioral characteristics by which an individual is uniquely recognizable and may include a digital, electronic, or physical record.

o.   **Identity Proofing:** The process of analyzing identity source documents provided by an applicant to determine if they are authentic, to contact sources of the documents to verify that they were issued to the applicant, and to perform background checks of the applicant to determine if the claim of identity is correct.

p.   **Infrequent Access:** Accessing VA facilities and/or information systems for a period of less than 6 months in a year, or a period of less than 180 aggregate days in a 1 year period.

q.   **Initiated:** The formal acceptance of an investigation for processing by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), denoted by a status of "scheduled" in the OPM PIPS.

r.   **Interoperability:** For the purposes of this Directive, interoperability allows any Federal government facility or information system, regardless of the PIV issuer, to verify a cardholder's identity using the credentials on the PIV card.

s.   **Logical Access Control System (LACS):** Systems which authenticate and authorize an individual to access federally-controlled information systems.

t.   **National Agency Check with Written Inquiries (NACI):** Conducted by OPM, this investigation covers a period of 5 years and consists of a review of current records in the OPM Security Investigations Index (SII), DOD Defense Central Investigations Index (DCII), FBI name check, and an FBI fingerprint check as well as written inquiries to previous employers and references listed on the application for employment. It is used for Non-sensitive or Low Risk positions in VA.

u. **Non-PIV Credential:** A VA ID card containing a photograph issued to persons who do not require a PIV Credential but need unaccompanied, infrequent access to VA facilities or information systems for a period not to exceed six (6) months.

v. **Personal Identity Verification Card Applicant Representative (PCAR):** The PCAR represents the interests of current or prospective employees, contractors, and affiliates who are the applicants for PIV Credentials. They are responsible for assisting an applicant who is denied a PIV Credentials because of missing or incorrect information, and for ensuring that all applicants obtain useful information and assistance when needed.

w. **Personal Identity Verification Credential Issuing Facility (PCIF):** An installation that adequately houses and supports PCI personnel, storage of vital and sensitive records, test systems and associated components (hardware/software/firmware), and other operational components.

x. **Personal Identity Verification Credential Issuance Facility (PCIF) Manager:** The individual or entity responsible for the operations required of identity proofing and PIV card issuance performed by a PIV Card Issuer.

y. **Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Card Issuer (PCI):** An authorized HSPD-12 compliant PIV credential issuing organization that procures FIPS-approved blank identity cards, initializes them with appropriate software and data elements for the requested identity verification and access control application, personalizes the cards with the identity credentials of the authorized subjects, and delivers the personalized cards to the authorized subjects along with appropriate instructions for protection and use.

z. **Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Credential:** An identification card that complies with FIPS 201 and related guidance that contains a photograph and stored identity information so that the claimed identity of the cardholder can be verified by another person or an automated process. PIV credentials are issued to persons requiring routine access to VA facilities or information systems.

aa. **Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Registrar:** The individual or entity who establishes and vouches for the identity of an applicant to a PIV Card Issuer. The PIV Registrar authenticates the applicant's identity by checking identity source documents, identity proofing, and ensures a proper background check has been completed before the credential or credential is issued.

bb. **Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Sponsor:** The individual who establishes the need for a relationship between VA and the applicant and requests that a credential be issued to an applicant pending appropriate identity proofing and background checks. This PIV official role must be performed by a Federal government employee.

cc. **Physical Access:** Access to areas within or on a VA facility that may or may not be controlled by locks, card readers, guards, or other security devices.

dd. **Physical Access Control System (PACS):** Systems which authenticate and authorize an individual to access Federally-controlled government facilities.

ee. **Resource:** For purposes of this directive, the term "resource" refers to any physical or logical asset including but not limited to buildings, rooms, data (electronic and paper), and information technology.

ff.   **Routine Access:** Accessing VA facilities and/or information systems, without an escort and/or continuous monitoring by a VA official, for a period of more than 180 days in a 365 day period.

gg. **Special Agreement Check (SAC):** A SAC is an automated records check conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in collaboration with the Office of Personnel Management.

hh. **Visitor:** Any individual requiring escorted access and is on VA property fewer than fifteen (15) days in a 365 day period. Visitor Passes as stated in para. 2.a of VA Handbook 0735, are not governed by HSPD-12 policies. Issuance of visitor passes is the responsibility and at the discretion of each facility.

ATTACHMENT 8

Department of
Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

1. **Purpose:** This memorandum establishes Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy requiring VA Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Enrollment Stations to ensure the eligibility of PIV credential holders and to deactivate PIV credentials to individuals who do not satisfy processing requirements.

2. **Applicability:** This policy memorandum applies to VA organizations that maintain PIV Enrollment Stations.

3. **Policy:**

    a. In accordance with NIST FIPS 201-1, *Personal Identity Verification (PIV) of Federal Employees and Contractors*, March 2006, the PIV enrollment process shall begin with initiation of a National Agency Check with Written Inquiries (NACI) or higher investigation. This requirement may also be satisfied by locating and referencing a completed and successfully adjudicated NACI (or higher). In addition, the FBI National Criminal History Check (fingerprint check) must be completed before PIV credential issuance, renewal and/or replacement.
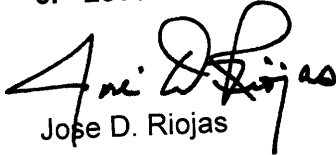
    b. All VA PIV Stations must evaluate information supporting the eligibility of all individuals who have previously been issued a PIV credential and ensure compliance for issuance, re-renewal and replacement credentials. If a PIV credential has been issued without meeting the above requirements, the PIV enrollment station must take action to deactivate the PIV credential and begin the process for enrollment (fingerprint check, background investigation initiation).

    c. The PIV Registrar provides the final approval for the issuance of a PIV credential to the applicant. Prior to issuing a PIV credential the Registrars must ensure the applicant has a favorably adjudicated fingerprint check (SAC) and a scheduled investigation. This can be verified by accessing the Central Verification System (CVS) through the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Personnel Investigations Processing System (PIPS). Access is limited to those individuals who have a favorably adjudicated background investigation above the low risk/NACI level. Access to CVS/PIPS can be obtained by contacting Trish Moore at trish.moore@va.gov or on 202-461-5240.

4. **Program Management Authority:** Authority for this program requirement is established in NIST Federal Information Processing Standards Special Publication 201-1, "Personal Identity Verification (PIV) of Federal Employees and Contractors" (FIPS 201-1), March 2006.

5. Point of Contact: The point of contact for this effort is Thomas Muir, Director, Office of Personnel Security and Identity Management (07C), who may be reached at Thomas.Muir@va.gov or on 202-461-7531.

6. Level of Release: Unlimited. This policy memorandum is approved for public release.

Jose D. Riojas

ATTACHMENT 9

Department of
Veterans Affairs

Memorandum

Date: FEB 2 6 2016

From: Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology (005)

Subj: Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Cards Issued Prior to Network Access
(VAIQ #7645688)

To: Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, and Other Key Officials

1. Over the past several months, the Deputy Secretary and the Office of Information and Technology have issued several memoranda requiring the use of Personal Identity Verification (PIV) cards to log onto VA networks and information systems. This requirement is firmly rooted in both VA and Federal policy and regulations.

2. Using PIV cards to authenticate to our information systems is crucial because it provides Veterans more assurance that their sensitive data is protected as securely as possible. To ensure universal use of PIV cards for logical access, I am directing my organization to grant network and information system access to new employees and contractors *only after* they have a valid, operational PIV card. Network and information system access will not be granted to any contractor or employee who does not possess a current PIV card fully enabled for logical access.

3. If you have any further questions about PIV logical access or this direction, please have a member of your staff contact Susan Perez at susan.perez@va.gov or on 202.461.6552, or Gary Stevens at gary.stevens2@va.gov or on 202.632.7538.

LaVerne H. Council

cc:
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Information Technology Resource Management (005F)
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of Information Security (005R)
Deputy Chief Information Officer, Architecture, Strategy and Design (005E)
Deputy Chief Information Officer, Office of Product Development (005Q)
Acting Deputy Chief Information Officer, Service Delivery and Engineering (005OP)
Executive Director, Quality, Performance and Oversight (005X)
DCIO, Account Manager for Corporate (005C)
Acting Deputy Director, Interagency Program Office (005J)